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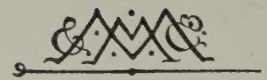

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IRISH HISTORY

FOR

YOUNG READERS

BY

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FOREWORD

THE object of this little work is to tell the story of Ireland's history simply and impartially. If this has been accomplished, it is due to the wise counsel and the practical help which have been extended to the author by the kindness of many friends.

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CHAPTER I

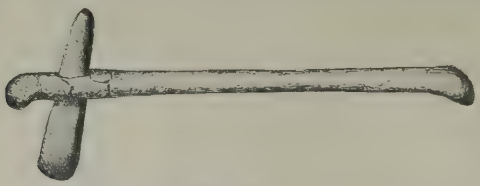
TRACES OF IRELAND'S EARLY INHABITANTS

The Stone Age. — Long before any one thought of writing history, men and women lived and toiled in Ireland. We may catch distant echoes of their coming, and poetic pictures of themselves, in the beautiful Irish legends; but if we are in search of definite facts, we must gather them from such relics of early ages as survive to-day. Those who live near Dublin have the fullest opportunity of doing this for themselves, by visiting the National Museum in Kildare Street. For the sake of others, we shall attempt to read and reproduce some of the Museum's evidence about the lives which were lived in Ireland in the remote periods before history began.

Flint Arrow Head. Montelius.

Products of the Stone Age.—A whole room is devoted to what is known as the Stone Age. How far the Stone Age stretches backwards no man knows, but its immense antiquity will be appreciated when we learn that it drew to its close in 1500 B.C., or about the time when Joseph was sold into Egypt. In those distant days metals were unknown in Ireland, stone was used instead. Flint proved particularly valuable; it

split easily, and the fragments assumed sharp points suitable for spears or arrows, and keen edges suitable



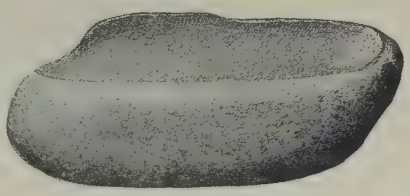
Stone Axe with Wooden Handle. Montelius.

for knives. The numerous specimens of these early weapons which lie before us suggest that war and the

Flint Hâche. Boyd Dawkins' *Early Man in Britain.*

chase were the chief occupations ; but the domestic arts also are represented. For instance there are stone axes or " celts " in quantity, and these would be valuable

not only for the destruction of foes but for felling and trimming timber. Some of the earliest of the flint implements are designed for preparing the skins of animals, which were used for dress and many other purposes; numerous fragments of pottery, some of them elaborately ornamented, are shown; a distaff tells us that skins were not the only materials used for clothing; primitive corn rubbers point to the cultivation of crops; and there are beads and other gewgaws, which show that even an Age of Stone could boast its "dandies."

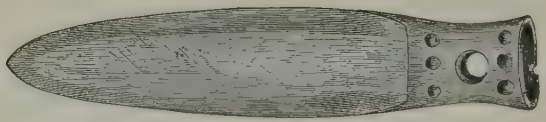


Stone Hand-mill. Montelius.

The Bronze Age.—We find ourselves in contact with a totally different world when we pass into the great room which contains the weapons, the utensils, and the ornaments which those who lived in the Bronze Age produced. Some of the stone articles from the Stone Age are of extreme beauty, they bear comparison with those of any other country at the same period; they are not surpassed, perhaps they are not equalled, by any which are made to-day; but at best the uses to which stone is adapted are severely limited, and possibilities for development in all directions opened up (1) when copper was found, (2) when some thoughtful observer noticed that it melted in the fire, and, after cooling again, retained the shape of any clay

Bronze Brooch. Boyd Dawkins' *Early Man in Britain.*

hollows into which it had poured, and (3) when some genius discovered that, if he added a little tin, the incon-

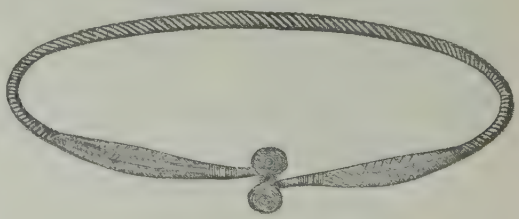


Bronze Knife. Boyd Dawkins' *Early Man in Britain.*

venient softness of copper was overcome, and the splendid compound now known as bronze was at his service.

In Ireland the Bronze Age began to supersede the Stone Age about 1500 B.C. A good deal later bronze was supplemented rather than superseded by iron, and the Iron Age began. The Museum Collections dating from these periods tell us much about the skill, and not a little about the civilisation of our land and its people in those distant times. We have no information as to the individual lives of those who made, or who used the objects which we see, but we have no difficulty in drawing trustworthy conclusions as to their capacity and their taste.

Bronze Dagger. Montelius.

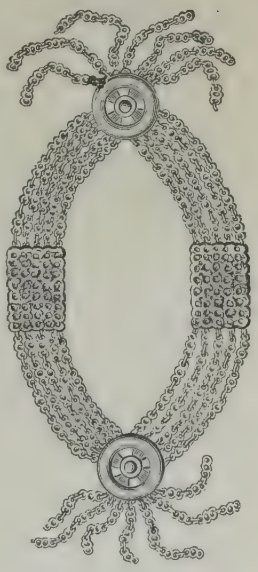


Bronze Torque. Montelius.

Beautiful Objects from the Bronze Age.—It would only be tedious to attempt anything like an enumeration

of the many beautiful and varied objects which the room contains ; our end will be served sufficiently by selecting a few for notice.

Look at those weapons—the illustrations on page 4 give a very fair representation of some of them—whether you think of their fitness for their purpose, or of the artistic beauty of their design, you must give them the highest praise.



Fragment of a Suit of Bronze Ring-mail. Irish Museum of the Royal Irish Academy.

It is the same with the many industrial tools and the domestic utensils which you see. For instance, examine one of these great cooking caldrons ; how deftly the bronze plates of which it is composed are fastened, how graceful is its shape, how fittingly is it ornamented.

But it is in connection with the Bronze Age ornaments that our admiration rises to its highest. Here the design and the workmanship are alike the envy and the despair of most modern jewellers. The bronze rings, and pins, and brooches would reflect credit on any period ; as for the ornaments of gold they are quite unrivalled. The weight of the gold in the ornaments in the British Museum is not 60 oz. The Dublin Museum contains gold ornaments which weigh nearly 600 oz.

CHAPTER II

RULERS, LAWS, AND HOMES IN EARLY TIMES

From the brief glimpse which Chapter I. gives of the Bronze Age we learn that in the centuries which led up to, and immediately succeeded the birth of Christ, our country had made marked progress in civilisation, and was conspicuous for its artistic skill. If we go on to inquire for details about the men who were the moving forces in those far-off days, the only answer is a few names recorded in what are known as Ogham characters, on monumental stones; but we are better off when we ask how the country was ruled, what system of law it used, and what kind of dwellings the people and their rulers possessed; for what we ascertain about such matters as these when history begins, may be safely carried back into earlier times.

The Tribal System.—Settled government in the modern sense did not exist; instead, a tribal system prevailed. Each family was ruled by the head of the family; a number of related families would form a clan or sept, and be ruled by a chief; groups of clans living in the same part of the country would form a tribe and be subject to a king; the lesser kings acknowledged the overlordship of the kings of the five provinces, Ulster, Munster, Leinster, Connaught, and Meath, and over all was the Ard-ri (ree) or high king of Ireland.

Brehon Law.—An elaborate system of law, known as the Brehon Law, was in force; but for our purpose the only point which need be noted is that the Brehon system was so rooted in the affections of the people, that

Ogham Stone, Templemurry, Co. Mayo. Photo by W. Lawrence.

it held its ground long after the introduction of the codes from which the laws of to-day are descended.

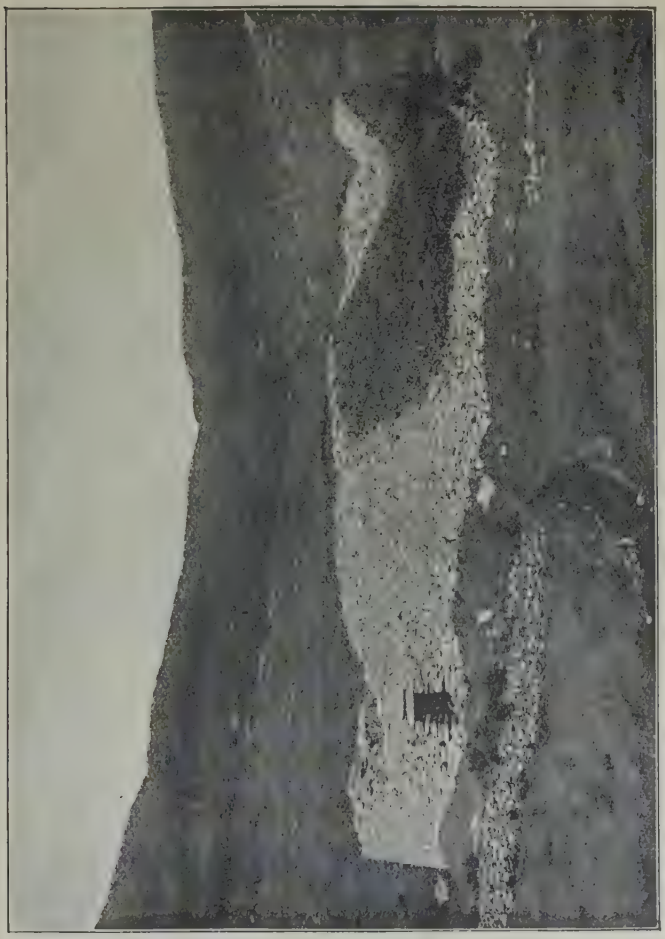
Dwellings.—The dwellings were of wickerwork, and as a rule circular in shape. There were no towns, or even villages, such as we have now. Except for the comparatively small portions under tillage, dense woods

and wide bogs were everywhere, and wild beasts, such as the wolves, were many and formidable. Dangers from unfriendly tribes, too, were never very far distant—the love of a fight which has descended to our own days

The most famous Ogham Stone, the Key to the Ogham Characters, Mulchedar, Dingle. Photo by R. Welch.

ensured frequent petty wars—hence the dwellings were protected by circular mounds, crowned by strong palisades. Sometimes these mounds enclosed a group of houses, and sometimes, as in the case of the residence of a king or a chief, there were as many as three mounds,

one outside the other. The traces of these mounds, or



Staigue Fort, Co. Kerry. Photo by W. Lawrence.

raths as they were called, are to be found in many parts

of Ireland to this day, and many modern names recall them, such as Rathmines or Rathdrum. The more extensive fortifications were known as *duns*; the title survives in such names as Dundalk and Dundrum.

Tara.—While life in general must have been rough and difficult, there is ample proof of the state observed

Giant's Ring, Belfast. Photo by R. Welch.

by the kings and chiefs. The great centre of the national life was Tara. All its buildings, being of perishable material, have disappeared; but it is still possible to trace the ground plans, of its many raths, and of its great banqueting hall. The beautiful objects which we have spoken of as surviving in the National Museum bear witness to the splendid dress and the cultivation of the arts. There is evidence in the local names, which suggests long processions of fine horses and skilful drivers. We

know that the judges and the bards, and other learned men were held in high honour at court. Already the Irish love of learning had begun ; even in remote parts we find evidence of the existence of ancient schools, and prominent teachers.

CHAPTER III

THE COMING OF ST. PATRICK

A.D. 432 TO A.D. 465

Raids on Great Britain.—History proper commences in Ireland with the coming of St. Patrick, A.D. 432. Before his time some great figures stand out, as Conn of the Hundred Fights, and Niall of the Nine Hostages. The titles of these kings show plainly how they won their fame—they were successful warriors. Niall is especially important because he brings Ireland into contact with Great Britain. In more than one great foray he swept the opposite coasts, and even the haughty Romans, who then ruled Britain, dreaded the inroads of the "Scots," which was the name by which the Irish were known in those days.

Patrick a Captive.—In one of his forays Niall, or some of his people, seized and made captive a young lad, who was destined to alter the whole of Ireland's future. For many years Patrick, for he it was, lived as a slave, tending his master's flocks on the slopes of Slemish, a hill in the County Antrim. He was a Christian, the son of a deacon and grandson of a priest; and so it came to pass that, instead of hating his captors, and longing for revenge, he sought only their good. Contriving to escape when about twenty-three years old, he dedicated his life to the conversion of Ireland to

Christianity, and entered upon a careful course of preparation for his great mission.

Religion in Ireland, A.D. 432.—Some writers are of opinion that even before St. Patrick's time Christianity was not unknown in Ireland. However this may be, it is certain that the people generally were pagans, and such religion as they knew was what the Druids taught. The chief Druids were held in high honour at the courts of the kings ; they were believed to be capable of wielding the forces of nature with terrible effect. Even in St. Patrick's Hymn we find the petition :

> Against the wizard's evil craft,
> Against the death-wound and the burning,
> The choking wave, the poisoned shaft,
> Protect me, Christ, till Thy returning.

St. Patrick's Mission.—It was against the power and the influence of the Druids that St. Patrick had to contend. Returning as a Bishop in A.D. 432, his first object was the conversion of Milchu the chief, whose slave he had been. But Milchu heard of his coming, and feared the exercise of magical powers like those of the Druids. Determined to anticipate his fate, he caused a great funeral pile to be prepared, so that when St. Patrick came in sight he found only the flames in which his master had perished.

Unshaken by his disappointment, the saint next prepared for a still bolder effort. He knew that if Christianity was once accepted at the court of the High King, all Ireland would be open to his preaching. To Tara accordingly he determined to go. The Ard-ri at this time was Laoghaire (Leary), son of the Conn in whose reign Patrick had been captured. The King and his Druids were on the eve of a great pagan festival ; it was strictly forbidden under any circumstances to light a fire until the fire signal shone from the royal palace.

To the indignation of Laoghaire a fire flamed up unbidden on the horizon. A hasty consultation with the Druids told the monarch that the fire was Patrick's, and that if not forcibly extinguished it was destined to overspread the land. Forthwith the chariots were ordered, and King and Druids and courtiers hastened to arrest the invader. Halting when within reach, Laoghaire summoned Patrick into his presence. There were strict orders that when the stranger approached, none should rise from his place, lest they should be bewitched. We read that, as the saint drew near, one young warrior, Erc by name, involuntarily rose; a spell was indeed upon him, the sacred spell of a good man's influence, which resulted in his becoming one of the first Bishops of the Irish Church.

The Conversion of Ireland.—Few of that great company were unmoved as they listened to the message St. Patrick brought. From that day forward King Laoghaire allowed to St. Patrick, and those with him, full liberty to preach and to teach; he himself did not accept Christianity, but his protection gave free course to the missionaries. Through all parts of Ireland they travelled; traces of St. Patrick's own personal work are to be found in every province, and when he died in years and honour about 465, he was already recognised as Ireland's Apostle. He was buried at Downpatrick, where his tomb is pointed out in the graveyard of the Cathedral.

CHAPTER IV

HOW IRELAND AS THE UNIVERSITY OF THE WEST REPAID HER DEBT TO BRITAIN

The birthplace of St. Patrick is uncertain, our choice seems to lie between Scotland and Wales. Certain it is, however, that he came, bearing his rich gifts to Ireland, from the British side of the sea. In this, and in the next two chapters, it will be our privilege to tell how nobly the debt of grace was repaid by an Ireland which came to be regarded as the University of the West, and whose devoted sons and daughters earned for her the sacred title of the Isle of Saints.

Circumstances favourable to Christianity and Learning.—Two circumstances to which allusion has been made help to explain the quite wonderful outburst of religion and of learning which resulted from St. Patrick's mission. The tribal system, which was in force throughout Ireland, lent itself readily to the formation of religious communities. It was as natural for men, or women, or, as in the case of St. Brigit's establishment at Kildare, for both together, to raise their simple rath-surrounded homes, and live under the rule of an Abbot, as it was for family groups to associate under a chief. The love and respect for learning already shown in the foundation of secular schools, and the position accorded to learned men, prepared the way for

the rapid advance of letters which Christianity fostered. The talents which even in the Bronze Age bore such remarkable fruits, only needed suitable opportunity to become productive in all directions.

Growth of Religious Communities.—Soon, therefore, religious communities arose in all parts of Ireland; to

The Dalriada Brooch. Weighs 2 oz. 0 dwt. 18 grains of pure gold.

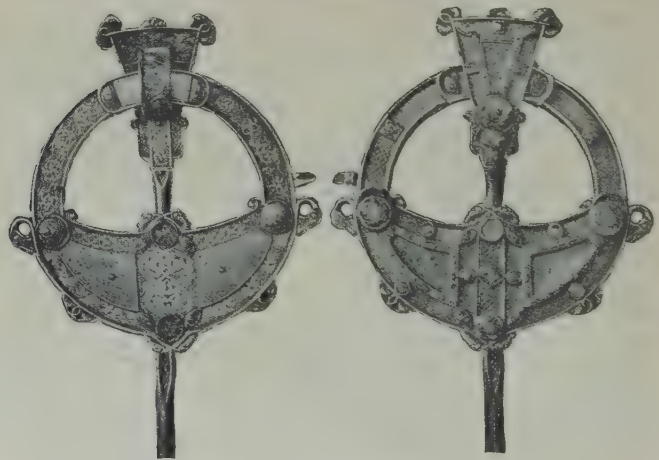
this day in the more remote parts, as on the Great Skellig off the coast of Kerry, or the little island of Innismurray near Sligo, some of the primitive buildings remain, little altered. Themselves devoted to prayer and the worship of God, these teachers, wherever they settled, made felt their influence for good; in particular the nature and the extent of their studies, together with their zeal for learning, began to attract students to their schools. Before long the fame of the Irish learning, and of the

generous welcome and lavish hospitality with which it was dispensed, leaped the ocean bounds, and spreading from Britain to the Continent, brought scholars of all ranks to Ireland's shores. Dagobert II., one of the Kings of France, was educated at Slane in Meath. Alcuin, an Englishman, to whom Charles the Great entrusted the revival of learning in his Empire, drew his inspiration from the school of Clonmacnoise upon the Shannon.

Clonmacnoise. Photo by R. Welch.

One of the earliest of these great schools was Clonard upon the upper waters of the Boyne ; it was in operation in the first quarter of the sixth century, within fifty years of St. Patrick's death. Its founder was St. Finnen, and it is said to have had as many as 3000 students in regular attendance. The numbers who attended these Irish schools were certainly very great ; Bangor in County Down had upwards of 2000 ; we read of as many as 50 coming in one ship bound for Lismore.

Subjects taught.—If inquiries are made as to the subjects taught in those early times, the difficulty is rather to say what was excluded. First of all there was exact and careful study of Holy Scripture; then a University education, in the full sense of the term, was given, including an accurate knowledge, not only of Latin and Greek but of Hebrew. In particular, the artistic work produced calls for attention. In the way



Back. Tara Brooch. Front.

of elaborate and beautiful illuminating there is nothing more wonderful in the world than the Latin manuscript of the four Gospels known as the Book of Kells, which is the proudest possession of the Library of Trinity College, Dublin; it is but one example of the skill and taste, which were common among the Irish Scribes, who found their most congenial exercise in the copying of Holy Scripture. Similar terms may be used in speaking of the work in gold and other metals, and of the exquisite enamels.

Whether we consider the general excellence of the designs, or the endless intricacies of beautiful detail with which they are embellished, we are alike entitled to give these

Ardagh Chalice.

Irish craftsmen a foremost place in the world of art. There are many who consider that such gems as the Tara Brooch, the Ardagh Chalice, and the Cross of Cong stand unrivalled in the artistic history of Christendom.

CHAPTER V

HOW IRELAND AS THE ISLE OF SAINTS REPAID HER DEBT TO NORTH BRITAIN

A.D. 521 TO A.D. 597

THE preceding chapter has shown us how Ireland lavished her learning upon Great Britain, receiving all who came, and instructing them free of charge in her famous schools. We have now an even more remarkable story to tell of the way in which Celtic gratitude was shown for the blessings of St. Patrick's mission.

Christianity suppressed in Britain.—In order to understand the heroic task which the Irish missionaries undertook, we must make careful note of a great change which had come over not only Britain, but also the greater part of civilised Europe, subsequent to the coming of St. Patrick. The Roman Empire, which had been supreme during the early centuries of the Christian era, was tottering to its fall, owing to the successive incursions of barbaric tribes who overran its great dominions. On the Continent the conquerors yielded an indifferent adhesion to the Christianity which they found, but in Britain the invading Saxons, or English as they came to be called, systematically exterminated both clergy and people, so that the land, from north to south, was once more pagan, just as Ireland had been when St. Patrick came.

Ireland's Resolve.—It requires no effort of the imagination to understand how the Irish Christians would feel as they learned of the terrible fate which had overtaken their brethren. Busy completing and consolidating the work which St. Patrick had begun, they appreciated the freedom from interference which they enjoyed, and were deeply grateful for the blessings which religion conferred on their country and its people. To hear of the ruthless way in which these blessings had been torn from those to whom they owed them, was in itself sufficient to kindle a burning desire for their restoration.

The monastic system has been criticised as unproductive because of the lack of labour in the lives of monks and nuns. Assuredly no such charge can hold against the early monastic establishments of the Church of Ireland. Attention has already been called (p. 15) to the way in which the grouping under an Abbot, who was often of royal blood, fell in with the tribal system, and was in consequence just the most suitable plan for the spreading of religion; we have seen with what far-reaching results the monks toiled as teachers in letters and in art; we are now to glance at their missionary zeal, which resulted in labours and achievements which form one of the brightest and most heroic chapters in the history of the Church of Christ.

St. Columba.—Foremost among those who devoted themselves to the conversion of Britain was St. Columba. The lineal descendant of the Niall who had carried off St. Patrick, it was fitting that he should be the means of bringing back St. Patrick's religion to the land from which he had come. Born in A.D. 521 amidst beautiful surroundings at Gartan in County Donegal, and educated under St. Finnen at Clonard, St. Columba's opportunity for the evangelisation of North Britain, or the land of the

Picts, came in A.D. 563, when he was upwards of forty years of age. Not alone by his princely birth and splendid presence, but also by high intellectual capacity, and a statesmanlike power of organisation, he was singularly well fitted for his task. Such was his zeal for the study of Holy Scripture and his skill as a Scribe, that there have been those who credited him with the wonders of the Book of Kells. Such was his energy in connection with the teaching of religion in Ireland that he was known as Columkille, or Columba of the Churches, owing to the great number of churches which he founded from Derry and Tory Island to Durrow in the King's County, and from Drumcliffe in Sligo to Kells, and Swords.

In addition to its spiritual desolation there was a special cause which made the call to North Britain strong. About A.D. 500 some Scots or Irish [1] had crossed from Antrim and founded a colony in what is now Argyleshire. When the Romans withdrew, the Picts became so powerful that the Scottish settlers found themselves in danger of extinction. What St. Columba undertook was no less a task than to roll back the tide of Pictish conquest, with no weapons but the cross of Christ, and in so doing to re-establish his Scottish brethren in their homes.

His Mission to Iona, and the Picts.—Well may we draw our breaths quicker as we think of the saint embarking on such an enterprise with no better temporal equipment than twelve companions contained in one or two of the frail boats of the time. In many ways the work before him resembled that of St. Patrick. St. Columba had the advantage of some friends in advance,

[1] It must be remembered that the name Scotland did not exist at this time. "Scots" was the name by which the ancient Irish were known; see p. 12.

but St. Patrick himself knew the country and its people. St. Columba had to employ as interpreters some Picts who had come to the Irish schools, and so learned Christianity. St. Patrick had learned the language in boyhood. In both cases similar results were attained. Each won a whole nation for Christ. It would be pleasant, were it possible, to dwell upon the details of St.

Iona Cathedral. Photo by R. Welch.

Columba's work, but space permits only a brief glance. We see him settling in Iona, and at first devoting himself to the trembling Scottish settlers. We follow him as he goes, St. Patrick like, right to the stronghold of Pictish authority at Inverness, where, despite the opposition of the Druids, he won from the powerful King Brude a moral support such as Laoghaire had extended to St. Patrick; we return with him to Iona, and find him, till

his death in 597, a centre of ceaseless activity; he plans for the zealous missionaries who were ready to do his bidding; he directs the founding of churches in favourable positions; men of all classes, preachers, traders, princes, seek his counsel and his blessing; and when at last the long life of self-denial and devotion closes, the world is the poorer by the loss of one of her noblest and most gifted sons, but the richer by the inauguration of a work which, as we are now to see, did much to revive a Christianity which was languishing, not alone in Pictland but in England, and over the whole of Western Europe.

CHAPTER VI

HOW IRELAND AS THE ISLE OF SAINTS REPAID HER DEBT TO SOUTH BRITAIN AND REVIVED CHRISTIANITY IN WESTERN EUROPE

A.D. 543 TO A.D. 651

THE example of St. Columba set free the missionary zeal of the Irish Church. The next two hundred years marked the period of its greatest activity, but even down to the eleventh century successive bands of preachers and teachers left their homes, spurred by the single-minded desire of winning souls for Christ. We select for special mention but two whose work has an illuminating bearing on Irish History.

St. Columbanus (543 to 615).—St. Columbanus chose France for labours which were afterwards continued in Switzerland and the north of Italy. A Leinster man, he acquired, in the schools of Lough Erne and Bangor, in County Down, the learning and fine scholarship which characterise his writings, some of which survive. His work was not so much the reintroduction of Christianity as the rekindling of the Christian spirit. France at the time was a byword for immorality and lawlessness. To stride boldly into the midst of such corruption, and to strive for its purification, partly by stern rebuke, partly by the force of elevated example, required not only

exceptional courage but also exceptional gifts. This was what St. Columbanus and his followers did. After twenty undaunted years, made memorable by the foundation of a succession of religious houses, some of which became the most famous of their time, the forces of evil at last procured his banishment. His way of retreat lay through Switzerland, whose libraries to-day bear testimony to his presence. Leaving St. Gall to continue the work, and to perpetuate the memory of his presence in the name of one of the modern cantons, Columbanus passed on to Italy, where he founded a monastery at Bobbio in the Apennines, which lasted till the French suppressed it in 1803.

St. Aidan (635 to 651).—The remaining saint to be noticed is St. Aidan, the Apostle of Northumbria. Like St. Columbanus he stands out conspicuously as showing what Celtic Christianity was able to accomplish. The year that St. Columba died saw the first attempt of Roman Missionaries, led by St. Augustine, to win England back to Christianity. Nearly forty years later the extent of their success was measured by what is now known as the County Kent. At this time King Oswald, who had himself come under the influence of Iona, was called to the throne of the great Saxon kingdom of Northumbria. He at once sought, from Iona, teachers for his pagan subjects. The first of these failed, and, retiring, gave it as his opinion that the Northumbrians were a "race of untameable savages," but Aidan, who followed, by his gentleness and inexhaustible forbearance, found his way to those stern hearts. His success proved contagious. Not only in Northumbria, but over the greater part of England the Irish missionaries succeeded. So signal was the work accomplished there and on the Continent by the indomitable zeal of the Celtic monks that "for a time it seemed as if the course of the world's history was

to be changed, as if the older Celtic race, that Roman and German had swept before them, had turned to the moral conquest of their conquerors, as if Celtic and not Latin Christianity was to mould the destinies of the Churches of the West." This, however, was not to be, their differences, which were confined to matters of discipline, came up for discussion at the Council of Whitby in 664, and there King Oswy decided against St. Colman and his followers, who on hearing the King's decision left the country and retired to their native land. The zeal for missionary work, however, persisted ; and so unceasing were the streams of earnest and devoted men who continued to pour from Ireland's shores that to this day memorials of their work abound in every country of Western Europe.

CHAPTER VII

THE DANES AND THE TRIUMPH OF BRIAN BORU

A.D. 795 TO A.D. 1014

If tradition may be trusted, Ireland had been conquered twice at least before the Christian era; for nearly eight centuries, however, after the birth of Christ the island was free from invaders. Twice during these centuries England had been conquered, first by the Romans, next by the Saxons; but Ireland on the outskirts of the world lay undisturbed. How she had used her immunity for self-development, and for conferring upon Western Europe the blessings of religion and learning has been told in the previous chapters. Now, like England, she was destined, for upwards of two hundred years, to become the prey of those terrible Norse rovers, the Danes and the Scandinavians.

Weakness of the Tribal System.—We have seen how the independent tribal system contributed to the rapid spread of Christianity under St. Patrick and his successors. But the weakness of the system was its lack of permanent central authority. Each kingdom was busy with its own affairs and rivalries, and there was no one to take counsel for the protection of the country as a whole. It is true that the Danes did not succeed in setting up an Irish kingdom, as they did

an English; true also that they continually suffered signal defeats at the hands of different Irish kings; nevertheless, their ravages and their settlements went on relentlessly, and it was only when Ireland at last became united under a single powerful ruler, of whose greatness we shall presently speak, that the danger of Danish domination finally disappeared.

Danish War-Boat.

Cause of Danish Ferocity.—Towards the close of the eighth century the Emperor, Charles the Great, made fierce war on Northern Germany, enforcing Christianity at the point of the sword. Thirsting for vengeance, the bolder spirits fled to Denmark and Scandinavia, and infected their kinsmen in those lands wholesale with the spirit of retaliation. To this cause we may

trace the origin of the Norsemen's raids; it explains in particular the fury with which they fell on church and monastery, and their pitiless massacres of the Christian clergy. At first they made isolated descents in search of plunder. Sweeping over the waves in their long war-boats of many oars, and rushing mail-clad, wielding their fearful battle-axes, they wrought havoc and destruction everywhere.

Permanent Settlement, Turgesius.—Soon larger bands, bent upon permanent settlements, began to arrive. For a while it looked as if one of their chiefs, Turgesius, who came in 831, might conquer the whole island. At Armagh, whence he expelled the Primate, he established himself; at Clonmacnoise upon the Shannon his wife desecrated the Great Church, and enforced his rule. To complete his hold he sought for a suitable port upon the east coast, and, having chosen the mouth of the Liffey, became the founder of Dublin. It began to seem likely that Turgesius and his successors would rule the whole of Ireland; but the desperation of Malachy, King of Meath, came to the rescue. In 845, some thirteen years after his landing, Turgesius was suddenly seized by the Irish king and drowned in Lough Owel near Mullingar.

Danish Towns.—Much might be written about the trading instincts of the Danes, and about their permanent settlements, for, in addition to Dublin, all the great southern ports, as Wexford, Waterford, Cork, and Limerick, are Scandinavian foundations; but it is both more interesting and more instructive to dwell on the means whereby Ireland shook off the Danish yoke, and to devote our space to the exploits of the national hero, Brian Boru.

Brian Boru.—Brian of the Tribute (Boru), so called because in the end all the kings and chiefs of Ireland

paid him tribute, was born at Kincora, Killaloe, about 930, and from his palace there, in later days, he ruled the whole country. In his conflicts with the Danes, and in the romance of his story, Brian closely resembles Alfred the Great. His elder brother, Mahon, was King of North Munster. Ceaseless were the efforts of both to make good their cause against the powerful Danes of Limerick. Pursued across the Shannon, and harried even in the wilds of Clare, Mahon reluctantly gave up the war. Not so Brian; thither and thither in every direction he marched and countermarched, never losing an opportunity of striking a blow; but so desperate became his situation that he was at last reduced to but fifteen followers. Then Mahon, stirred by his brother's heroism, determined to renew the struggle. Summoning all their clansmen, they put to the vote "peace or war," and, emboldened by the enthusiasm with which the shout of "war" was raised, they marched southward, and in a great battle, near the present Limerick Junction, signally defeated their foes, whom they pursued as far as Limerick. This was in 968. Eight years later Mahon was treacherously assassinated by two Irish chieftains, and Brian succeeded to his throne in 976.

The triumph of the traitors was short-lived; in two brief but fierce campaigns Brian shattered their power and that of their Danish allies. The career of conquest thus begun went on progressively. Having carried all before him in the south, in 984 he compelled the King of Leinster to submit. Connaught came next, and now there only remained Ulster and Meath. Malachy, their king, was at that time Ard-ri. He was no ordinary rival, his exploits against the Danes have been signally commemorated in Moore's lines:

> When Malachy wore the collar of gold
> Which he won from the proud invader.

But Brian proved irresistible. At first he was

Brian Boru.
From an engraving by A. Freschi of a Plate in Dublin College Library.

satisfied with an agreement which gave him the south

and left Malachy supreme in the north. Before long, however, he felt himself sufficiently strong to claim all Ireland for his kingdom. Malachy, recognising the hopelessness of resistance, yielded, and acknowledged Brian as Ard-ri. Thus, after a life of conflict, Brian in 1002 found himself supreme ruler of Ireland. The wisdom and capacity which marked his government were in keeping with the vigour which had raised him to his high office. For twelve years Ireland enjoyed peace and prosperity. Churches and Round Towers were built, roads were made, rivers were bridged, and justice was firmly administered. It is to the security which prevailed in Brian's reign that these well-known verses refer :

> Rich and rare were the gems she wore,
> And a bright gold ring on her wand she bore ;
> But oh ! her beauty was far beyond
> Her sparkling gems or snow-white wand.
> . . . . . .
>
> On she went, and her maiden smile
> In safety lighted her round the green isle ;
> And blest for ever is she who relied
> Upon Erin's honour and Erin's pride.

Brian's Conquest of the Danes.—The end of the aged king—he was now about eighty years old—was in keeping with his life. The Danes, encouraged by the proffered alliance of the King of Leinster, who had quarrelled with Brian, resolved upon a determined effort for the wholesale conquest of Ireland. Assembling at Dublin, which had remained in Danish hands, they took the field against Brian who had hastened up from Kincora. The battle was fought at Clontarf on Good Friday in the year 1014. It is estimated that there were as many as twenty thousand on each side. All day long the conflict raged with the utmost ferocity and

The Round Tower, Antrim. Photo by R. Welch.

determination, but at last the Danes broke and fled. Their defeat was complete, but it cost Ireland dear. At least four thousand of her warriors, including Brian's son and grandson, lay dead upon the field, and Brian himself was numbered among the slain.

CHAPTER VIII

RIVALRIES AMONG THE KINGS; BUT GENERAL PROGRESS

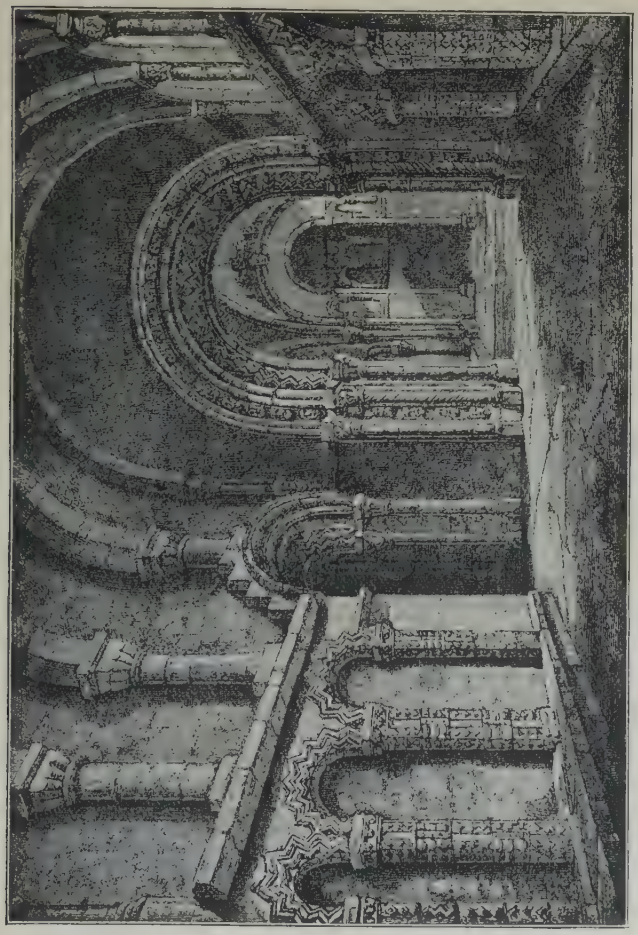
A.D. 1014 TO A.D. 1169

THE battle of Clontarf settled once for all the question of the rule of the Danes in Ireland. In England such was their success that they were able to set up a Danish kingdom under the celebrated Canute; but in Ireland their ambitions were shattered before the forces of Brian Boru. Henceforward those that remained lived as subjects; before long they merged in the Irish race, and their commercial talents became a permanent source of strength.

Rival Kings.—It was a misfortune that after Brian no successor was found strong enough to keep Ireland united under his rule. In consequence, there ensued an almost endless series of struggles for the position of Ard-ri. For more than 150 years we find the kings of the four provinces, Munster, Leinster, Ulster, and Connaught, engaged in perpetual wars, now one and now another rising to the top, only to be in turn mastered by one or other of his rivals. It is no wonder that a land so divided was unable to resist the invaders who were soon to come from England.

Progress.—But though King Brian Boru's political

vigour did not survive him, the good he had done con-



Cormac's Chapel, Cashel. After W. H. Bartlett.

tinued fruitful in many ways, so much so that, in spite

of the wars of the kings, the period shows revival and progress. Old roads were repaired, new roads were made, and travel was simplified by the building of bridges, such, for instance, as the great bridge which Roderic O'Connor, King of Connaught, threw over the Shannon at Athlone. In architecture the activity was

St. Patrick's Bell and Cover. Hall's *Ireland.*

widespread. Many of the beautiful Round Towers are thought to belong to this period, and churches were built in numbers. King Cormac's Chapel on the Rock of Cashel, a gem to this day, is a standing proof of what an Irish architect could accomplish in 1134. It was the same with the schools, both religious and secular ; their fame, which had become clouded in the terrible Danish times, again grew bright ; once more scholars came from

distant lands, and learned Irishmen were welcomed and became renowned in many parts of Europe. Nor did the fine arts fail to respond to the spirit of the time: such works as the Shrine or Cover of St. Patrick's Bell, made for a king of Ulster in 1091, and the Cross of Cong, made for a king of Connaught in 1123, bear eloquent testimony to the refinement and skill of the Irish workers. Finally, toward the end of the period, a desire for progress by friendly conference, instead of military force, began to appear. Not only were important Synods held, which permanently altered the government of the Irish Church, but a vast civil assembly was convened in 1167 by King Roderic O'Connor, which was attended by numerous representatives from the principal parts of Ireland.

Cross of Cong

CHAPTER IX

THE ANGLO-NORMAN INVASION

English Sovereign—Henry II., 1154–1189.

As far back as the time when the Romans ruled in Britain, longing eyes had been cast on Ireland from the opposite side of the water. As we have seen, the Danes succeeded in conquering England, but their prospects of ruling Ireland were overthrown by Brian Boru. Towards the close of the twelfth century, however, the days of Irish independence came to an end. In 1066 the Normans, who represented a former Danish settlement in the north of France, conquered England and established the Norman dynasty under William I. A hundred years later the throne of England was occupied by Henry II., a great grandson of the conqueror. Henry, who was a monarch of exceptional ability, ruled also over the larger part of France, and he came to the conclusion that his power would be vastly increased if he could add to his dominion the fair realm of Ireland.

Treachery of Dermot MacMurragh.—The opportunity for giving effect to this determination was supplied by Dermot MacMurragh, King of Leinster, a man of odious reputation. Deprived of his kingdom, and banished from Ireland on account of his evil deeds, Dermot sought for vengeance by invoking the aid of the English king,

to whom he promised his allegiance. Henry at the time was unable to leave France, where he was busy guarding his dominions ; but he gave permission for the enlisting of volunteers. This proved an easy task. Anglo-Norman knights in abundance were ready to profit by Dermot's offer. Richard de Clare, Earl of Pembroke, commonly known as "Strongbow," was won by the promise of Dermot's daughter Eva, and the hope of succession to the kingdom of Leinster ; for Dermot was without a son. The Geraldine chiefs, Maurice FitzGerald and Robert FitzStephen, were bought by the prospect of broad lands in abundance ; neither to them nor to Dermot did it matter that according to Irish usage the king had no power to choose his successor, and no lands which he could bestow.

Strongbow's Invasion.—Little would be gained by dwelling on the savage details of what ensued. Even a united Ireland would have found it difficult to resist such an assault, but with the treachery of Dermot to begin with, and the continuous weakness which the conflicting interests of the Irish chieftains involved, there was no prospect whatever of repelling the invader. In 1169 and 1170 band after band of Norman knights and English archers landed on the south-east coast. Wexford fell, Waterford fell, Dublin fell. There were many fierce fights, and on both sides much bravery was shown, but the Irish, with their inferior equipment and undisciplined ranks, were no match in open warfare for the mail-clad Normans, the most skilled soldiers of the time. So marked was the success of Strongbow and his Geraldine companions in overrunning Leinster that Henry felt it necessary to intervene in person, lest, if he remained away, Strongbow should attempt to found a kingdom for himself. Accordingly, in October 1171, he landed near Waterford with a force 10,000 strong. Thence

he moved to Dublin, whither his journey was more of the nature of a triumphal progress than an invasion; there was no possibility of interfering with such an army. Bowing to the inevitable, the Irish kings and chiefs made their submission and accepted the splendid hospitality of their new lord. The only important exception appears to have been O'Neill of Ulster. King Henry spent the winter in making provision for governing his new kingdom in accordance with English ideals. The Irish princes were allowed to hold their possessions in subservience to Henry as their feudal lord; governors were appointed in the towns; provision was made for the introduction of English law; and a Council was held at Cashel, where the Irish Church was brought into more complete harmony with the discipline and requirements of the Church of Rome. Having effected these changes, Henry sailed away in the spring of 1172.

CHAPTER X

THE ENGLISH IN IRELAND—THEIR MISTAKES

English Sovereigns—Richard I., 1189–1199; John, 1199–1216; Henry III., 1216–1272; Edward I., 1272–1307; Edward II., 1307–1327; Edward III., 1327–1377.

HAD it been possible for Henry II. to return to Ireland and to complete the work so vigorously begun in his six months' stay, it is likely that the subsequent history of the country would have been of a very different character. As it was, the period which commenced when the King left was marked by trouble and turmoil of every description.

Henry II.'s Provision for the Government of Ireland.—Among the acts of Henry enumerated at the close of the last chapter one was omitted whose far-reaching consequences commend it to separate mention.

The actual conquerors of Ireland, in so far as the term conquest may be considered to apply to an invasion which touched little except Leinster, were Strongbow and the Geraldines. To provide these warriors with an appropriate recompense for their exertions, they were made lords of large tracts of land. To place a curb upon their power, other great lords, as the De Laceys, the De Courcys, and the De Burgos, were introduced and similarly endowed; and further, to represent the King's majesty, a chief governor or lord-lieutenant was

appointed, who, being changeable at will, would serve to keep from others the supremacy which he had no opportunity of permanently usurping for himself.

Internal Strife.—Thus was introduced a new and chronic source of strife. Before the coming of the Anglo-Normans the rivalries of the Irish chiefs and kings led to perpetual warfare. Now the new lords were frequently in rivalry with each other, and all were at enmity with the native Irish, who not unnaturally resented the forced grants of land by which the invader had been enriched.

Over the scenes which occupied the next hundred years we shall hasten rapidly, merely pausing to notice some of the greater events or more prominent names which mark the way.

John's Visits.—Unable to revisit Ireland himself, Henry sent his son John, a youth of nineteen, to represent him in 1185. John had much of the capacity of his father, but it ran in evil channels. The chiefs who came to do him homage were rudely insulted, and the conflagration which ensued resulted in the speedy recall of the riotous young prince. Fifteen years later John came again bringing a formidable force. He was now king, and he desired to compose the incessant quarrels of his turbulent subjects. While he was present no one ventured to disturb the peace. He divided the south and east into counties, and made fuller provision for enforcing Norman law in the interests of the settlers; but the native Irish were left out of account.

Edward Bruce.—A hundred years pass by, years in which every part of Ireland in turn suffered the horrors of war, till in 1315 misery culminated in the invasion of Edward Bruce. Edward II. of England had been decisively defeated by Robert Bruce at Bannockburn. Buoyed by the hope which Scotland's success inspired,

the Irish of the north invited Edward Bruce, brother of Robert, to assume the crown of Ireland. The invitation was readily accepted. Bruce landed at Larne, where he was joined by an army under Donall O'Neill, and then ensued three years of carnage and destruction so awful that the lowest depths of misery were reached. As the tide of war rolled to and fro, Bruce found himself at first triumphant and crowned king at Dundalk, but in the end he was defeated and slain at Faughart.

Weakness of English Rule.—The intensity of the suffering which had been experienced during this terrible conflict, and the utter inability of the English King to render any assistance, produced their natural results; the Norman settlers drew closer to their Irish neighbours, intermarriage became frequent, and there grew up a common spirit of opposition to the helpless English government; the great lords became a law unto themselves, ruling in their territories like independent princes; the Pale, as the district which acknowledged English rule came to be called, shrunk and shrunk till it comprised little more than the four counties, Louth, Meath, Dublin, and Kildare.

Lionel, Duke of Clarence.—By the middle of the fourteenth century, fifty years after the Bruce invasion, English interests were indeed in a desperate condition. Once again the son of an English king was ruler. When Henry II. sent over John, he and his train goaded the chiefs to madness by plucking their beards. When Edward III. sent his second son, Lionel, Duke of Clarence, his efforts to preserve some semblance of English authority were equally unhappy.

The Statute of Kilkenny.—What the Duke found was an Ireland in which the descendants of the English settlers were uniting with the Celts in a common indifference, if not hostility, to English rule. Instead of

going to the root of the matter, and endeavouring to blend all together under a government benevolent in its intentions, and firm in its administration, he fell back upon a counsel of despair, and by the Statute of Kilkenny, passed in 1367, he endeavoured to keep the two races permanently apart, with the object of profiting by their dissensions. The attempt was vain. The separatist provisions of the Statute were never really observed; perhaps their only active effect was to accentuate the general hostility to England.

CHAPTER XI

ART MACMURROGH KAVANAGH, KING OF LEINSTER

English Sovereigns—Edward III., 1327–1377; Richard II., 1377–1399; Henry IV., 1399–1413.

THE conditions of Ireland in relation to England at the close of the fourteenth and the beginning of the fifteenth centuries can be gathered readily enough from the doings of Art MacMurrogh Kavanagh, King of Leinster. That an Irish king should have existed in Leinster at this period, not only in independence, but often in defiance of English authority, is in itself significant enough; but Art MacMurrogh reigned for no less than forty-two years. He met the Lord-Lieutenant, who was heir to the English throne, and defeated and slew him in open fight; he even dared to make war upon the King himself, and with such effect that when peace was offered he was able to refuse the terms. That these things should happen two hundred years after the so-called Conquest, is a demonstration of the inefficiency and helplessness of the English rule in Ireland at that period.

Every step in Art MacMurrogh's career tells the same tale. Chosen king in 1375, he married the daughter of Maurice FitzGerald, fourth Earl of Kildare. For marrying an Irishman in disobedience to the Statute of Kilkenny, she was deprived of her titles and her property.

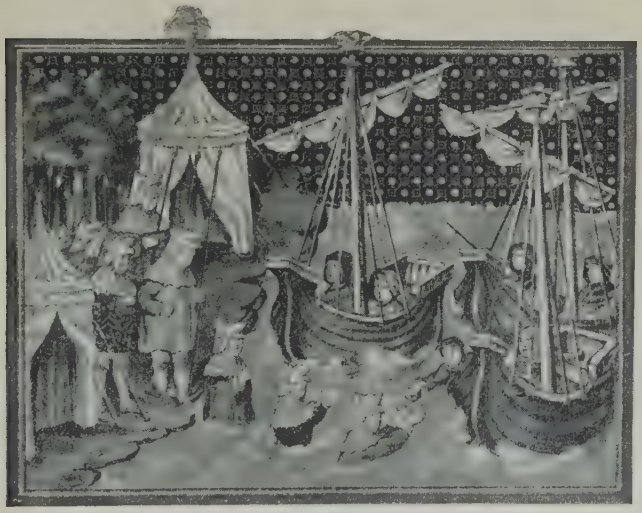
MacMurrogh was strong enough to enforce their restitution, but he never forgot the injury which had been done. Another cause of indignation was the stoppage of his *Black Rent.* So feeble was English authority even in the Pale that it had become customary to make regular payments to the neighbouring Irish chiefs, in the hope of securing their protection. MacMurrogh's fury at the stoppage was so terrible, and his reprisals so severe, that the *Black Rent* was restored, and it continued to his descendants, down to the reign of Henry VIII.

Richard II. in Ireland.—The King of England at the time was Richard II. Stirred by what he heard of Ireland's state of unrule and unrest, he prepared the largest force which had ever crossed the Channel, and landed at Waterford in 1394 with some 34,000 troops. Art MacMurrogh, undeterred, ravaged the districts round Dublin, and placed difficulties of all kinds in the way of Richard's march. Recognising, however, that the King's army was irresistible, he and the other Irish chiefs—there appear to have been some seventy of them—decided to submit. They were graciously received by the King and splendidly entertained. Before he left, Richard knighted MacMurrogh and three others, O'Neill of Ulster, O'Connor of Connaught, and O'Brien of Thomond. He then appointed his cousin and heir, the Earl of March, Lord-Lieutenant, and returned to England.

Defeat of the English Army.—The King had been nine months in Ireland, yet so little had he accomplished that strife broke out again the moment his back was turned. MacMurrogh took command of the Irish forces, and a pitched battle was fought at Kells, in which the English were defeated, and the Earl of March killed.

Second Expedition of Richard II.—It had been well

for Richard if he had left to others the duty of punishing the audacity of the King of Leinster. But once again, in 1399, he landed with a great army at Waterford, and again MacMurrogh took the field against him. This time, instead of keeping to the open country, Richard endeavoured to storm the Leinster fastnesses. It was



Ships bringing Provisions to the English Troops.
MS. Harl, 1319.

a hopeless undertaking; mountain and valley, forest and bog, conspired to make his efforts futile; and ever the Irish leader, with his light and active troops, hung upon his flanks and rear, now charging irresistibly when least expected, again disappearing, as swiftly as he came, into the unknown. Wearied and almost perishing with hunger, the English army at last bored through to the sea upon the coast of Wicklow. But for the timely presence of ships with provisions, sent from Dublin, but few

of them could have escaped. As they moved northward along the coast, MacMurrogh, who had kept harassing them in every possible way, sent word that he was willing to come to terms. The message was hailed with joy, and the Duke of Gloucester was commissioned to treat. An eye-witness has described the meeting, and

Conference of the Earl of Gloucester and MacMurrogh.
MS. Harl, 1319.

given us a picture of MacMurrogh's arrival. Swifter than hare or deer he came, magnificently mounted, brandishing an immense spear. As he charged with his followers at full speed down the face of a hill, a glance was sufficient to explain his great personal power, and the many victories he won.

MacMurrogh refuses the Terms offered.—Nothing came of the meeting, for MacMurrogh refused the proffered terms, and Richard's threats of vengeance melted before

the news that Henry of Bolingbroke had landed in England, and that the only hope of retaining his crown lay in instant return. The contrary winds, which delayed and delayed the crossing, soon put an end to Richard's cause; but MacMurrogh continued powerful and prosperous until his death seventeen years later.

CHAPTER XII

THE RISE AND FALL OF THE EARLS OF KILDARE

English Sovereigns—Henry IV., 1399–1413; Henry V., 1413–1422; Henry VI., 1422–1461; Edward IV., 1461–1483; Richard III., 1483–1485; Henry VII., 1485–1509; Henry VIII., 1509–1547.

Unhappy Condition of Ireland.—The condition of Ireland for the next hundred years was deplorable. The kings of England at first were engaged in a vain struggle for their French dominions, later they and their subjects had to face the horrors of civil war. In consequence of the disastrous French wars and the Wars of the Roses, little or no attention was paid to Ireland, and English rule became weaker and weaker. The Pale shrunk to a "little strip of territory, about fifty miles long by twenty broad," guarded by a ditch or pale to keep out the Celtic foe. Everywhere violence and outrage were everyday events. Within the Pale there was one law for the English, another for the Irish, and the Irish were trodden underfoot. Without, every one was a law unto himself. The great lords, or "degenerate English" as they were called, fought with one another or with the native Irish princes indiscriminately. The robbery of cattle and the destruction of crops were so unceasing that it is hard to imagine how the poorer classes contrived to exist.

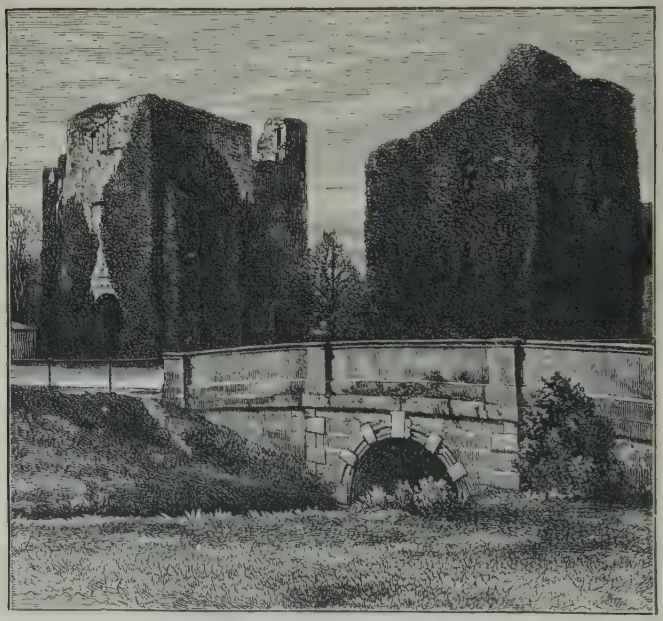
Military Reputation of the Irish.—That a nation

whose people were always at war should have earned a military reputation never since forfeited is not surprising. Irish soldiers were early in request. For Edward I. they fought in Scotland; at Crecy they did doughty service for Edward III.; in the Wars of the Roses they were formidable on both sides. More remarkable is it to find that, notwithstanding the turmoil, the characteristic love and respect for learning survived. Justly celebrated are the learned assemblies which gathered at the hospitable invitation of Margaret, wife of O'Conor of Offaly, about the middle of the fifteenth century. Nor were the Anglo-Norman lords behindhand. Thomas FitzGerald, eighth Earl of Desmond, who was appointed Lord-Deputy in 1463, founded, and splendidly endowed, a college in Youghal which long continued to flourish; and the other branch of the FitzGeralds, of whose celebrity as Earls of Kildare we must soon speak, were conspicuous for their cultivation, and their patronage of learning.

Richard, Duke of York, Lord-Lieutenant.—Among the English governors, Richard Plantagenet, Duke of York, Lord-Lieutenant in 1450, is conspicuous. Differing from most of the other governors, whose policy was mainly one of coercion alike for the Irish and the "degenerate English," he aimed at a rule which should be fair to all, and was deservedly popular. As a natural consequence, we find the Earl of Kildare upon the Yorkist side in the Wars of the Roses which began in 1465, while his great rival, the Earl of Ormond, who through distance would have known less of the Duke of York, sided with the Lancastrians.

Causes of Rise of the Geraldines.—The success of the House of York and the accession of Edward IV., coupled with the death of the Earl of Ormond at the battle of Towton, and the forfeiture of much of his

property, led to the almost undisputed ascendancy of the Geraldines. Both the Leinster and Munster Fitz-Geralds had so completely identified themselves with the Irish that they enjoyed, equally with the native chiefs, the unswerving affection of the people. The Earl of



Castle of the Geraldines at Maynooth.

Desmond, who, as we have seen (p. 53), had been made Lord-Deputy in 1463, was arrested and executed in 1467, nominally because of sympathies and alliances with the Irish, which violated the Statute of Kilkenny (see p. 46), but more probably because he had spoken slightingly of Edward's queen. He was succeeded by his cousin, Gerald FitzGerald, eighth Earl of Kildare, whose talents

and prominence have caused him to be known as "the Great Earl." From this time onwards, for nearly three-quarters of a century, the Kildares were in the ascendant. One after another, for three generations, they were chief governors of Ireland. In England the Yorkist dynasty gave place to the Lancastrian under Henry VII., but the powers of the Kildares continued undisturbed. Intermarrying as they did with the royal family of England, ruling in Ireland with a splendour which was almost regal, it is not wonderful that enemies were ready to whisper accusations of treason, and to insinuate that they aimed at the Crown. For long they were able to face and master their foes, but at last, when the sceptre came into the rash hands of a youth of twenty-one, their ambition took the form of open rebellion, and they suffered the inevitable results of a conflict with the might of England.

The Great Earl.—The Great Earl had ruled for nearly twenty years when Henry VII. ascended the throne. Whatever Henry's feelings may have been towards the Yorkist earl, he was alive to the necessity for conciliating so powerful a noble; accordingly, he continued him in his office, and even when Kildare championed the cause of the Yorkist pretender, Lambert Simnel, whom he crowned in Dublin, Henry contented himself with summoning him to London and entertaining him at a banquet where Lambert Simnel was compelled to play the part of butler. A few years later, when the Earl was found to be in sympathy with another pretender, Perkin Warbeck, and was suspected of conspiring with some of the Irish chieftains, he was again summoned to London and put on trial, but his splendid audacity triumphed over all accusations. Allowed by Henry to select his counsel, "Whom should I choose but the greatest and most skilful in the land," was his reply as

he claimed the King on his side. Confronted with evidence that he had set fire to Cashel Cathedral, "Yes," he said, "because I thought the Archbishop was inside." Well might his opponents exclaim, "All Ireland cannot rule this Earl," to which the King, with a fine mastery of the facts of the situation, replied, "If so, this earl shall rule all Ireland." Thus reinstated, Kildare ruled vigorously and loyally till his death, seventeen years later, in 1513.

Gerald Oge.—He was succeeded in his title and his great estates by his son, Gerald Oge FitzGerald, and Henry VIII., who had hopes of reducing Ireland to order through a due recognition of Irish sympathies and rights, appointed him Lord-Lieutenant. Like his father, he soon became a mark for the attacks of jealous foes, which at first he easily repelled. Called to England in 1520 to give account of his rule, his visit of humiliation was transformed into a triumph. Henry, won by his courtly grace, took him with him to the splendours of the "Field of the Cloth of Gold," and gave him in marriage the Lady Elizabeth Grey, a relative of his own. Twice more the Earl was entrusted with the government of Ireland; it seemed as if each effort to injure him only resulted in a greater accession of power. It is possible that through success he became unduly bold in his ambitions, and dreamed of being king; more probably the inveterate malice of his enemies caused him to conclude that his only safety lay in the accumulation of resources great enough to ensure immunity from attack. However this may be, in 1534 he was again summoned to England, and immediately placed under arrest.

"Silken Thomas."—Before leaving Ireland the Earl had nominated his son as Lord-Deputy. "Silken Thomas," as the young man was called, was famous

only for the excessive richness of his clothes, and he soon fell a ready victim to the many rivals who were on the watch for an opportunity of injuring his house. An unfounded rumour was circulated that his father had been arraigned and executed. On hearing the tidings, the young lord flung prudence to the winds, and, without attempting an investigation, threw down his sword of office, and declared war upon the King. The rash deed brought about the arrest, the false announcement of which had lured the unfortunate youth to his destruction ; and Gerald Oge FitzGerald, foreseeing the doom of his family, died in the Tower of a broken heart. In the following year the rebellion of Silken Thomas collapsed. He and five of his uncles were arrested. In order to ensure their capture, tempting promises of pardon and consideration had been made ; but the pledges went for nothing, and all six were executed.

CHAPTER XIII

WISE GOVERNMENT UNDER THE TUDORS, AND GENERAL CONTENT

English Sovereigns—Henry VII., 1485–1509; Henry VIII., 1509–1547.

THE suppression of the rebellion of Silken Thomas marks an epoch in Irish history. Before it the English rather occupied than ruled the country. After it their grasp gradually tightened until all was under control. The absence of firm government, and the evils which resulted, during the previous 350 years, were largely due to England's struggle with France and Ireland's geographical position. So long as this great land to the south made such heavy demands upon English resources, it was not possible to spend much upon the western island, with its inconvenient barrier of stormy water. The one King, Richard II., who made a serious effort to cope with Irish turmoil, had lost his crown before the winds permitted his return. But under the Tudors the dream of French conquest was over, and serious attention was soon given to the problems which the Government of Ireland presented.

Poyning's Law.—The first step of importance was taken when Sir Edward Poyning was appointed Lord-Deputy in 1494. He assembled at Drogheda a Parliament, which has made his name memorable. The only

occasion hitherto on which the Irish Parliament has come under our notice was in connection with the Statute of Kilkenny. That Statute sufficiently illustrates its customary character. Summoned when the Lord-Lieutenant or his Deputy chose, attended only by repre-

St. Laurence's Gate, Drogheda.

sentatives of English interests, closed against the Irish, and consistently hostile to their advancement, Parliament had played but a sorry part in Irish history. The act by which the Parliament of Poyning is remembered brought the Irish Parliament under the control of the King, as distinguished from his representatives, and made it illegal to pass any law in Ireland which had not previously been considered and approved in England.

It is easy to understand how oppressive such an ordinance appeared, when the whole country was brought under rule and was subject to Parliamentary enactments; but at first the law seems to have been regarded as a proof that Ireland was to receive more thought and attention from the King himself, instead of being subjected to the caprices of individual viceroys. This view derived colour from the other acts of Poyning's Parliament, which, so far as they went, aimed at the repression of tyranny and lawlessness, and sought to make provision for the impartial and regular administration of English justice.

Plans for Improved Government.—From this time onwards the condition of Ireland and its needs attracted more and more attention, and many plans for its improvement were proposed. Thus we find Lord Surrey, who was Viceroy in 1520 under Henry VIII., recommending conquest on a large scale, and the wholesale introduction of English settlers. It is the first we hear of a policy which was destined to play an important part later. Henry, however, refused to entertain the project. He desired to establish undisputed authority in Ireland, but he sought it rather by attempting to conciliate the Irish than by displacing them.

The King's opportunity for giving effect to this policy came in connection with a Parliament which he caused to assemble in Dublin in 1541. After the execution of Silken Thomas and his uncles, in 1537, there had been much disturbance. The Geraldines were connected with all the important princes and nobles in Ireland. Their fate brought about an alliance entitled the Geraldine League, which for a time threatened a universal rising. Henry's ecclesiastical policy, of which we shall have more to say in the next chapter, helped to fan the flames, and for a time the hands of Lord Grey,

the Deputy, were fully occupied. He succeeded, however, by combining wise clemency with military vigour, in bringing about a state of general tranquillity, and the Parliament of 1541 resulted. To this Parliament for the first time in Irish history were invited the representatives of all the different interests in the land; the Irish chieftains, and the great Anglo-Irish lords, as well as the nobles of the Pale attended; the country was weary of strife, and the conciliatory attitude of the King inspired hope. The chief business of the Parliament consisted in conferring on Henry the title King of Ireland; hitherto the English monarch had been content with the title Lord. In return, peerages were conferred upon a number of the Anglo-Normans and the Celtic chiefs, through whose goodwill Henry hoped to make his authority universal.

General Content.—How well this policy, ably interpreted as it was by the Deputy Sir Anthony St. Leger, succeeded, may be gathered from the following quotation from a contemporary document: "The winning of the Earl of Desmond was the winning of the rest of Munster with small charges. The making O'Brien an earl made all the country obedient. The making of M'William Earl of Clanrickard made all the country during his time quiet and obedient as it is now. The making of M'Gilpatrick Baron of Upper Ossory hath made his country obedient. . . . And the gentleness that my Lord-Deputy doth devise among the people, with wisdom and indifference, doth profit and make sure the former civility, so as presidents in Munster, Connaught, and Ulster, by God's grace, make all Ireland, without great force, to be obedient."

In a word, the rule of King Henry was established, and Ireland was for the time content.

CHAPTER XIV

RELIGIOUS POLICY OF THE TUDORS

English Sovereigns—Henry VIII., 1509–1547; Edward VI., 1547–1553; Mary, 1553–1558; Elizabeth, 1558–1603.

In order to understand the religious movement known as the Reformation, we must recall what we have learned about the Irish Church. The Reformation began in the reign of Henry VIII., but the events which led up to it date back as far as the coming of Henry II. in 1171.

Condition of Religion before Henry VIII.—In the twelfth century, at the Council of Cashel, the Irish Church was brought into more complete harmony with the discipline and requirements of the Church of Rome (p. 42), and this condition of things continued up to the time of the Reformation.

Unhappily for our country, her religion was deeply affected by the causes which produced so much warfare and misery throughout the land. While the Anglo-Normans were everywhere striving for increased possessions, the Anglo-Norman clergy began to occupy all the important positions in the Church, and instead of trying to bring about better feeling, and promote unity, they looked down upon the Irish clergy, and kept them at a distance. While the land was torn with war, and the clergy in different camps, the religious life of the people necessarily suffered, and we are not surprised

to learn from a Roman Catholic historian that "the corruption of the fifteenth century had deeply affected both Churches; low as had been their spiritual state, this seems to have become even lower than before."

How the Reformation was introduced. — The attempt to introduce the Reformation was made in the following way. The English kings had for long been dissatisfied with the political authority which the Pope claimed to exercise in their dominions, and Henry VIII., who was a very powerful monarch, was personally displeased because the Pope would not grant him a divorce from his first wife, Catherine of Aragon. He accordingly determined to reject the authority of the Pope, and he succeeded in getting the English Parliament to pass an Act which named him Supreme Head of the Church of England. This was in 1534, and in 1536, by a similar Act passed in Dublin, Henry was constituted Supreme Head of the Church of Ireland. A further step which the King took was to abolish the monasteries. This was done with much rigour in England, and in Ireland some four hundred religious houses were suppressed, their lands were seized and given to laymen, and their inmates were turned upon the world penniless and homeless.

Edward VI.—While Henry lived nothing more was undertaken, but when Edward VI. succeeded in 1547 more changes came: thus the use of the English Prayer Book was commanded, and an English service was held in Christ Church Cathedral, Dublin, on Easter Day 1551. Soon after the English Prayer Book was published in Dublin.

The person who took the most prominent part in carrying out these changes was George Browne, whom Henry had appointed Archbishop of Dublin in 1534. He had been an Augustinian monk, but he was now a

zealous reformer; on his side was the Lord-Deputy, and he was supported by the authority of the Crown. Within the English-speaking districts many of the laity in the towns and cities conformed, and many of the bishops took the oath acknowledging the King as supreme. There was, however, some important opposition upon the part of the Archbishop of Armagh, and in large tracts outside the Pale the movement had no force.

Mary.—When Edward VI. died and Mary became queen she set herself to bring back Roman Catholicism, and Roman Catholic doctrines were revived; but no disposition was shown to restore the wealth which had been acquired by abolishing the monasteries.

Elizabeth.—The accession of Elizabeth in 1558 again promoted the work of reformation. The Queen was made supreme Governor, and the English service was enjoined by law. Wherever English influence was strong, many of the laity and some of the clergy obeyed, and with some exceptions the bishops who attended the Parliament of 1560 probably took the required oaths.

CHAPTER XV

LAND TROUBLES—THEIR CONSEQUENCES

English Sovereigns—Henry VIII., 1509–1547; Edward VI., 1547–1553; Mary, 1553–1558; Elizabeth, 1558–1603.

"Plantation" of King's County and Queen's County.—In the reign of Queen Mary was begun a new land policy which pressed with great severity on the Irish wherever it was introduced. As we have seen (see p. 60), one of the plans recommended for firmly establishing English rule consisted in the introduction of a large number of settlers. Henry VIII. rejected this plan, and preferred trying to win Ireland by showing consideration for Irish rights and feelings. Not so Queen Mary. Upon the ground that their chiefs were disloyal, the Irish who lived in the large tracts which are now King's County and Queen's County were driven from their homes, and their lands were given to English settlers. Maryborough, called after Mary, and Philipstown, after her husband Philip of Spain, perpetuate the memory of the deed.

English and Irish Systems of Land Tenure.—As a help towards understanding the opposite ways in which the English and the Irish viewed such a transfer of property, it is necessary to know something of the different principles which governed the ownership of land in the two countries. In England all land belonged

in theory to the sovereign ; from him the barons held their territories on condition of rendering certain specified services, such as support in time of war ; under them lesser tenants held, and were bound in return to the discharge of similar services. When the King engaged in war he summoned his barons to his side, and they came accompanied by their knights and their lesser retainers. Under this system, whenever any of those who held land were guilty of treason their estates as a matter of course were forfeited to the Crown.

In Ireland a totally different system prevailed. The land belonged not to the king or chieftain but to the tribe. The king as leader of the tribe was entitled to substantial dues in support of his royal state, and these dues included the life-ownership of a certain amount of land, termed mensal land ; but the whole tribe, like a great family, owned, and were entitled to support from, the tribal land. It followed that no act of the chief's could interfere with the possession of the land, or alienate it from the community.

Attempted Changes in the Irish System.—From the time of Henry the Second's invasion the English monarchs had aimed at owning the land of Ireland just as they owned it in England ; but it was long before there was any possibility of enforcing their claims. Henry VIII. was the first who had any marked success. We have seen him (see p. 61) summoning both the Anglo-Irish lords and the Irish princes to a Parliament ; on that occasion high-sounding titles were bestowed upon them, they were made peers of the realm, and in return they agreed to hold their lands, as the English nobility held them, namely, as vassals or tenants of their liege lord the King.

Thus theoretically at any rate the whole system of land tenure was changed ; nor need we wonder much

at the readiness with which the chiefs accepted their changed position. Under the new system they at once attained to property rights and powers which they had never previously possessed. For this reason it was easy to perceive the immediate advantages; the consequences which were implied in their acquiescence lay for the time out of sight.

Results of Land Confiscation.—From this account of the difference between the English and Irish systems of land tenure we may understand how differently the two nations viewed the confiscation of land. When the chiefs of Leix and Offaly, having agreed to hold their territories from the Crown, broke out into disturbances and thinly veiled rebellion, to the Queen and her counsellors it seemed a natural consequence to proclaim that their lands were forfeited and to bestow the best portions of them upon English settlers. The transformation of these territories into the King's County and the Queen's County, when considered from the English standpoint, was an excellent piece of management, but in Irish eyes this confiscation of lands was an inexcusable outrage. The tribesmen had been oppressed and often plundered, sometimes by enemies, sometimes by their own chiefs, but from time immemorial they had shared with one another the right to feed their cattle upon the pastures, and to till small holdings for individual use; in their view no act of the chief could in any way affect these rights; to be driven by force from what they considered their inalienable possessions, to be compelled to see others making permanent settlement upon lands where they had always been free to roam, constituted an offence for which there was no forgiveness. From one point of view the *plantation system*, as it came to be called, had excellent results; but it also produced a crop of hatred which has never died out.

Alarm and Unrest in Ireland.—Attention has been pointedly called to Mary's plantations, because they offer a key to much that happened in her sister's reign. For England there have been few more glorious periods than the long reign of Elizabeth, 1558–1603 ; but seldom has Ireland suffered more acutely. As the strong grasp of the Tudors tightened, the Irish princes and the Anglo-Norman nobles grew more and more uneasy. Constrained to look on while some of their brethren — as the chiefs of Leix and Offaly—were squeezed out of existence, it is not wonderful that they sought eagerly for opportunities of strengthening their power and establishing their rights. At first there was much to encourage their aspirations. Elizabeth's position was one of extraordinary difficulty ; as the champion of the Reformation she found herself confronted by all the Roman Catholic powers of Europe ; in particular Philip of Spain was ever on the watch to strike a deadly blow. Understanding this, the O'Neills in the north and the FitzGeralds in the south felt little hesitation in drawing the sword. Believing that their future under English rule offered them no security, they hoped by means of the Pope's blessing and the strong arm of Philip to shake off for ever the grasp which was threatening them with extinction. Some of the deeds they dared and their results will be told in the next chapter.

CHAPTER XVI

SHANE O'NEILL—HIS STRUGGLE FOR ULSTER

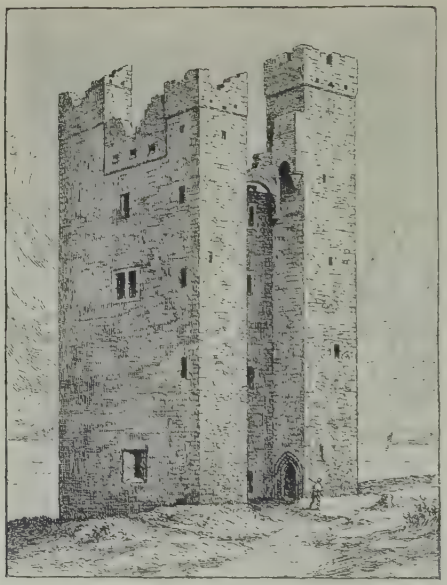
English Sovereign—Elizabeth, 1558–1603.

ELIZABETH'S reign began well in Ireland; for many reasons she would have preferred to conciliate the Irish, and she turned a deaf ear at first to those who urged further "plantations."

Shane O'Neill defeats Sussex.—Trouble commenced in the north when, in 1559, Shane O'Neill was unanimously chosen by the tribe to succeed his father, whom Henry VIII. had made Earl of Tyrone. The heir, according to the patent, was a minor, a grandson of the Earl. Shane had cleared the way for himself by killing the young lad's father, and he now boldly asserted his claim. After much parleying, Sussex, the Lord-Lieutenant, marched against him; Shane, nothing daunted, fell suddenly on his assailants, and Sussex suffered a sharp defeat. Next the weapons of the assassin were employed, but Shane escaped unharmed; and now the only plan which seemed open for reducing to order this formidable foe was to lure Shane to England, that he might be dealt with by Elizabeth herself.

Shane O'Neill at Elizabeth's Court.—Shane, who was now supreme in Ulster, was magnificent in his style and his demands; as became his rank, he would treat only with the Queen herself; as became his dignity,

large sums must be advanced for his expenses; as becoming escort he must have those chiefs of the Irish nobility the Earls of Kildare and Ormond. And now we see the descendant of the long and princely line of the O'Neills at Court; he is presented by the Earl of Kildare



Shane's Castle. Mrs. J. R. Green's *The Old Irish World.*

and does homage, but he abandons none of his claims. His Irish dress and his bareheaded bodyguard of gallowglasses excite the wonder of the courtiers; but the Queen is glad that he is come, and her gracious reception sets an example which all follow. There were those who would gladly have prevented O'Neill from ever returning. Not so Elizabeth. By a blending of audacity

and flattery Shane had made himself acceptable to the Queen; the news which reached her as to the disturbed condition of Ulster suggested thoughts like those of Henry VII. in connection with the great Earl of Kildare (see p. 56); such a course was made easy by the death of Shane's rival; accordingly, Elizabeth bound the chieftain by many promises and sent him back to restore order in Ulster.

Shane O'Neill supreme in Ulster.—The promises he had made did not weigh heavily on Shane. Much information had come his way during the months spent in London. He had learned how formidable a rival Elizabeth had in Mary Queen of Scots; he had ascertained from the Spanish Ambassador much that was important concerning the hostility of Philip of Spain; he gave promises in order to make good his escape, but scarcely had he returned when he began to attack and plunder his neighbours and to set the English power at defiance. Bent on ruling Ulster, and intoxicated with success, he seemed to think that he could harry the northern chieftains as he pleased, and that he would be strong enough to overcome any combination of forces which they and the English could muster against him.

There could be but one end to such a career. Shane had made for himself bitter foes on the east, and on the west, as well as on the south. On the east there was a powerful settlement of MacDonnells from Scotland, and the Scotch at that time being no friends of England, when Shane attacked and defeated the MacDonnells in the north of Antrim, he could assume that he was doing the Queen's work. On the west, chiefly in what is now Donegal, lay the territory of the O'Donnells, great chiefs in Ulster second only to the O'Neills. Instead of conciliating them, Shane had used his power to cover them with indignities; their chief, Calvagh, he held in

perpetual captivity, and he kept him chained so cruelly that neither by day nor night could he stretch his limbs. As for the English the general incompetence of Sussex had made them rather objects of contempt than of fear.

Thus Shane held on his ambitious and audacious career for upwards of four years. Elizabeth felt constrained to make a peace with him, and acknowledge him as "The O'Neill" and chief of Ulster. Shane had made good his boasts that Ulster was his own and that he would keep what his sword had won.

Shane O'Neill's Struggle with Sydney.—But a change came when, in 1565, the weak Sussex was replaced by the strong and vigorous Sydney. In 1566 a carefully planned campaign was carried out with entire success; the Viceroy marched north in great force, and post after post was taken and garrisoned. Shane in vain watched for an opportunity of striking, but he was able to do nothing except retreat; right to Derry Sydney went, and he returned through Donegal, where his support and recognition put new life into the O'Donnells.

Shane O'Neill's Defeat by the O'Donnells and Death.—Even with so capable an opponent as Sydney matters would probably have been different for Shane if there had been friends at hand. What he did at first was to exhaust his energies in seeking help from a distance; to his Geraldine cousins in Munster, to Scotland, even to France urgent emissaries were despatched; but none came to his assistance, and alone he was unable to give battle. What he did further was to indulge in an insane attempt to punish the O'Donnells. For the winter Sydney had returned to Dublin, and in the spring Munster and Connaught urgently demanded his attention. This to Shane seemed to offer the opportunity he sought. He marched in force upon the O'Donnells, thinking there was no one to interfere. It was his last fight. The

O'Donnells in their desperation fell suddenly on the O'Neills, near a ford over the Swilly, not far from Letterkenny ; a rising tide which barred retreat helped, with the result that a force of about 400 slew, according to the different estimates, from 1300 to 3000 of Shane's men.

With difficulty The O'Neill himself escaped. Hopelessly defeated by the O'Donnells, he took the desperate course of seeking refuge with foes scarcely less embittered, the MacDonnells. At first he was received and treated with some show of courtesy, but the same evening they quarrelled in their cups ; the struggle was brief ; Shane's body, hacked almost to pieces, was thrown into a neighbouring chapel ; his head, pickled in salt, was carried to Dublin, where Sydney paid 1000 marks for the ghastly satisfaction of exposing it over the gate of Dublin Castle.

It was an ignominious end to a career which had shown many of the elements of greatness. Intemperate in his habits, cruel to his prisoners, and deficient in the statecraft necessary for upholding and consolidating power, Shane is allowed, even by his foes, to have ruled justly and kindly over his own people ; and the position of prominence to which he attained, together with his success in so long resisting and baffling his opponents, are alone sufficient to demonstrate his capacity as a ruler and as a general.

CHAPTER XVII

THE SOUTHERN GERALDINES—THEIR STRUGGLE FOR MUNSTER

English Sovereign—Elizabeth, 1558–1603.

After Shane's downfall there came a time of comparative quiet, and Sydney used it to strengthen the power of the Crown. Wherever it was possible to map out the land in counties, and to establish County Courts, English rule and English law were likely to prevail. The Deputy summoned a Parliament in the autumn of 1567, and an Act was passed arranging for the whole country to be made shireland. It was further made an offence against the law for any one to assume the title or the authority of a chief, in a district which had been formed into a county. Another step of importance taken by Sydney was the appointment of Presidents of Munster and Connaught. Before his time it had been the custom to rule by encouraging the Irish chiefs to make war on each other, and profiting by their quarrels. Sydney took a higher view, and the presidencies of Munster and Connaught were set up in order that rulers of ability, properly supported by English troops, might establish law and order.

Further Plantations. — "Plantations" were attempted in Antrim and Down; but the resistance offered

by the people in possession was so determined that both attempts failed. In Munster a similar enterprise was planned on a large scale.

Alarm of the Southern Lords.—It so happened that the first lands attacked belonged to relatives of the Earl of Ormond. The Ormonds had always been friendly to English rule, and at this time the Earl was a favourite at Elizabeth's Court. His loud complaints immediately commanded attention, and the lands of the Butlers were made safe. The attempt, however, proved to be the beginning of one of the most terrible periods Ireland had yet seen. At that time power in the south was divided between the Butlers, headed by the Earl of Ormond, and the southern FitzGeralds, whose chief was Gerot, thirteenth Earl of Desmond. They fought with each other upon the smallest provocation, and to such a state of wretchedness had their unceasing wars and raids reduced the country, that Sydney found whole tracts, once cultivated, waste and without inhabitants. Everywhere there were the ruins of towns, villages, and churches, which had been burned. "And there," he says, "I heard the lamentable cries and doleful complaints made by that remnant of poor people which are yet left, hardly escaping sword and fire, or the famine which their tyrannical lords have driven them into, either by taking their goods from them, or by spending the same by taking coyne and livery. Yea, the view of the bones and skulls of dead subjects, who, partly by murder, partly by famine, have died in the fields, as in truth hardly any Christian with dry eyes could behold."

It is not difficult to understand the adoption of the plantation system when we come face to face with such terrible abuses. To introduce flourishing colonies into these scenes of misery and desolation might easily appear the best, if not the only possible remedy open to the

English Government. On the other hand, neither the Irish nor the Anglo-Irish could be expected to share this view, and we are not surprised to find that a thrill of horror passed through the country as the vast plans for seizing the southern lands became known. With the exception of the Earl of Ormond, who, as events had shown, could count on the strong support of Elizabeth, there was no one who could be sure his lands would be safe. In the west, in the south, even within the limits of the Pale, a spirit of unrest and disaffection began to stir, and, as the result, the terrible Desmond rebellion broke out.

The Desmond Rebellion.—Little would be gained by dwelling upon the scenes of horror which followed; there were no outstanding events, and no great leaders, but always the fair southern lands which form the province of Munster were torn by contending armies, whose sole war-cry seemed to be Destroy, and whose common practice was to spare neither life nor property.

The first stage of the rebellion closed in 1573. In 1579 the struggle was begun again. Now it partook, in some respects, of the nature of a holy war. Ormond, who had joined the Reformed Church, fought with the Government. Desmond, a Roman Catholic, was the chief personage on the other side. The Pope blessed the Desmond banners, and Philip of Spain sent troops and supplies. Even in Leinster there was a rising, and the new Deputy, Lord Grey, suffered defeat at the hands of Lord Baltinglass. This was in 1580. Soon after the Spanish forces, who were shut up in the fort of Smerwick in Kerry, surrendered, and by Grey's orders were massacred in cold blood. For five years more these frightful scenes continued; gradually the resistance of the Desmond party grew weaker and weaker, and the Earl himself became a hunted fugitive; at last, in 1585, he

was surprised and slain, and the rebellion was at an end.

Munster planted. — The inevitable consequences followed. The enormous Desmond estates, estimated at as much as half-a-million acres, were forfeited to the

Sir Walter Raleigh. Picture at Knole.

Crown, and it was determined to deal with them in a thorough manner. Other plantations had succeeded poorly because of the insufficient numbers of the settlers. All possible precautions were taken to avoid similar failure now. Those who accepted lands, as a condition of their grants, had to *undertake* to settle themselves in

sufficient force upon their holdings. From this they came to be called "undertakers." Two of these undertakers have left famous names Sir Walter Raleigh

Edmund Spenser. From Vertue's engraving.

received a large grant in the neighbourhood of Youghal, where his house remains to-day in good preservation. The poet Spenser obtained an estate upon the Blackwater, and lived in Kilcoleman Castle, whose ruins may still be seen.

We close this chapter with an extract from Spenser's

description of the miserable people over whom these long years of war and outrage had swept. "The people were brought to such wretchedness as that any stony heart would have rued the same. Out of every corner of the woods and glens they came, creeping forth upon

Ruins of Kilcoleman Castle. After W. H. Bartlett.

their hands for their legs could not bear them, and if they found a plot of water-cresses or shamrocks, there they flocked as to a feast for the time; that in short space of time there were almost no people left, and a most populous and plentiful country suddenly left void of man and beast."

CHAPTER XVIII

SIR JOHN PERROTT—A SUCCESSFUL RULER

English Sovereign—Elizabeth, 1558–1603.

After the horrors of the Desmond rebellion Ireland was again quiet for a time. Rest was sorely needed. The Government was entrusted to Sir John Perrott. He was a strong man and a just. As President of Munster, he had seen only too much of Irish troubles and their cause. He now applied what he had learned to the country as a whole. One prominent act of his, indeed, cannot be excused. The O'Donnells, after their defeat of Shane O'Neill, became extremely powerful. Perrott thought they were likely to be dangerous unless checked, and he determined to seize Hugh Roe (the Red), the heir of Sir Hugh O'Donnell, and to hold him as a hostage for his father's loyalty.

This was his plan. One autumn day in 1587 there sailed into Lough Swilly what seemed a merchantman laden with wine; her store was rapidly sold, and when young Hugh Roe, who lived with his foster-father MacSweeny in the castle of Rathmullan, applied, word came back that there was no more wine for sale, but that if he would come on board he would be entertained with plenty. Unsuspectingly he came, and for a while all was pleasure; but presently, as they feasted and drank, it was noticed that the ship was moving. Hugh

and those with him grasped for their arms—too late, the weapons had been stealthily removed, and Hugh Roe O'Donnell, a helpless prisoner, was carried to Dublin, where he was confined in the Castle. Perrott no doubt thought he had played well for the peace of Ireland; future events were to show how great was his mistake.

County System extended to Ulster.—The kidnapping of the O'Donnell heir is the one blot in Perrott's rule; in all else he has earned general commendation. He succeeded in extending the county system to Ulster; at a Parliament held in 1588 he won the hearts of the Irish leaders, much as St. Leger had done in 1540; and he carried out the settlement of Connaught with so much ability and fairness to everybody's claims that the loyalty of the Connaught chiefs was secured, a matter that proved of vital importance in the troubles that were to come.

CHAPTER XIX

OPPRESSION OF PERROTT'S SUCCESSORS: REBELLION OF HUGH O'NEILL

English Sovereign—Elizabeth, 1558–1603.

High-handed Acts in Ulster.—Perrott was succeeded by very different men. Under the pretence of thoroughly subduing Ulster, acts of high-handed oppression were undertaken. Upon the smallest pretence chiefs were deprived of their possessions and even executed.

For instance, M'Mahon, chief of Monaghan, had surrendered his lands, and received them back under a grant to himself and his heirs; upon his death, Hugh Roe M'Mahon, his brother, claimed the estate, and his claim was allowed. Soon, however, charges were laid against him. The alleged offences were so unimportant that the Queen was inclined to think he had committed only "such moral offences as are ever ordinarily committed in that realm." None the less M'Mahon was tried, condemned, and executed, and his lands were divided.

Alarm of Ulster Chiefs.—In the presence of such dealings, it is not surprising that the Ulster chiefs became alarmed for their safety. Foremost among them was Hugh O'Neill, a brother of the young O'Neill whose death had made way for the recognition of Shane (see p. 71).

Hugh O'Neill at first loyal.—Hugh O'Neill was a man of marked capacity. Brought up at the Court

Hugh O'Neill. From *The Irish Nation*, by James Wills, D.D., 1875.

of Elizabeth, and therefore well acquainted with English power and English policy, he began his career by loyally serving the Crown. Elizabeth acknowledged him as

Earl of Tyrone, and made him a grant of the O'Neill lands, which had been forfeited on the death of Shane. In return, Tyrone fought for the Queen in the Desmond wars, and guarded her interests in Ulster by acting as a check upon the ambitions of Turlogh Lenagh, who had been chosen by the tribe to succeed Shane.

Becomes estranged.—It seems likely that under better circumstances Tyrone would have continued loyal. There was, however, always the fear which the plantation system had aroused; and this was brought home to the Earl himself by the many acts of harshness and cruelty which he witnessed in Ulster itself. By gradual steps he drew farther and farther away from the Queen, and when, in 1595, on the death of Turlogh Lenagh, he was chosen by the tribe to be "The O'Neill," he was already upon the point of rebellion.

His Strong Position.—At this time the Earl's position was one of real strength. Unlike Shane, who, when not occupied in resisting England, seemed to seek recreation in fights with his neighbours, Hugh O'Neill lost no opportunity of welding the north together. Perrott's kidnapping of Hugh Roe O'Donnell had aroused the bitterest resentment. Tyrone made friends of his hereditary foes by helping Hugh Roe in his escape and by marrying his sister. He was equally successful in conciliating the MacDonnells of Antrim, who helped him to win his greatest victory; and with all the lesser chiefs it was the same; when he drew the sword, Tyrone, as The O'Neill, had a united Ulster at his back. Nor was he satisfied with securing all possible help at home; in every part of the country he sought assistance, hoping to bring all Ireland into line; and further, he endeavoured to win countenance and support from the Pope and from Philip of Spain. From the Pope, who saw in him one who might become a powerful champion of the Roman

Catholics, he received the honour of a vassal crown; from Philip, ever seeking opportunity for avenging the destruction of his Armada by Elizabeth, he obtained many promises, some of which bore fruit.

Nor was it only in seeking allies far and wide that Tyrone was active. His upbringing in England, and the service he had seen in Elizabeth's armies, had given him wide and varied experience; in particular, he had become acquainted with the most approved methods of warfare. Of Shane it was characteristic that he gloried in Irish customs and despised all others; not so Tyrone; his acute mind was keen to adopt anything which promised benefit to himself or his people. Hitherto Irish soldiers, through lack of training and equipment, had never been a match for the English; one English soldier armed with a gun had been the equal of a dozen Irish with only skeans and spears. All this was altered by Tyrone, so much so that his men, well armed and carefully trained, were destined to meet on equal terms, and to overcome the best troops the Deputies could put into the field against them.

Proclaimed a Traitor.—In the eyes of the Government the assumption of the title and style of "The O'Neill" spelled defiance; Tyrone was proclaimed a traitor, and preparations were made for reducing him to submission. It was to prove no easy task. Tyrone and O'Donnell were both brilliant in the field, and they were able, though opposed by capable commanders, not only to hold their ground, but to inflict sharp defeats. For upwards of two years the conflict went on without any decisive event; but in 1598 there came a victory for Tyrone, which set half Europe wondering, and seemed to promise final and complete success.

The Battle of the Yellow Ford.—The present County Tyrone formed the territory of the O'Neills. On the

south it is bounded by the windings of the river Blackwater. To guard the principal ford, which gives entrance and exit to and from Armagh and Tyrone, an English fort had been erected. In August 1598 it was held by a gallant soldier, Captain Williams, who vigorously resisted the Earl's efforts to obtain possession of the place.

With the view of relieving Williams, a strong force was put into the field. Those who understood the locality and O'Neill's strength doubted the wisdom of the attempt. But the Commander, Marshal Bagenal, was confident. Tyrone, for his second wife, had married Bagenal's sister ; the Marshal was opposed to the match, and when it took place he refused to hand over the bride's private fortune. From this and other causes there existed between the two the bitterest private feud, and Bagenal desired passionately to be the means of humiliating O'Neill.

The English army numbered about 4000, and was accompanied by 320 horse and four field pieces of ordnance. Marching from Dundalk, they reached Armagh unopposed. Meanwhile Tyrone had made good use of his time. The Blackwater fort lies five miles north of Armagh ; between, running from south to north, flows the little river Callan, which was fordable at a place called Ballinaboy—the mouth of the Yellow Ford. The whole approach was made difficult by bogs and woods. Leaving the fort behind him, the Earl halted, with his right resting on the Ford, and occupied his troops in placing obstacles and barriers along the two miles which the English army must traverse from Armagh. The most formidable of these was a great dyke a mile long, five feet deep, and four feet across, which he fortified by a dense hedge of thorns. Behind the dyke were stationed the main body of the Irish army. They were certainly as

numerous as the English, and some accounts make them as numerous as two to one.

The morning after reaching Armagh, Bagenal marched to the attack; his army was in six divisions, with upwards of a quarter of a mile between each. He hoped to avoid many of the obstacles by keeping to the right, and the long intervals may have been planned to facilitate freedom of movement under difficulties.

But Tyrone was not to be so easily outwitted. The night before he sent forward a strong body of skirmishers, who formed an ambuscade on each side of the English. Scarcely had Bagenal started when he found himself under a galling fire. There was nothing to be done but press forward; and forward the English gallantly went; obstacle after obstacle was passed, till the first division even succeeded in rushing the great dyke and in forming up on the far side. This was the one success of the day, for now misfortunes came thick and fast. Bagenal was with the second division; before he could cover the intervening distance and bring support, the first division were cut to pieces. Presently the Marshal himself, who had lifted his visor, was shot through the head. His men stormed the trench, only to share the fate of the first division on the other side. Meanwhile, the third division, who were making frantic efforts to extricate the largest of their guns, which had stuck fast in a bog, were surrounded and destroyed. The fourth division rushing to their assistance—in this fight there was no lack of gallantry on either side—were blown to pieces by the awful explosion of their own waggon of gunpowder. As for the last two divisions, O'Neill had made careful provision for them; while bravely struggling on to help their unfortunate comrades, they found themselves fiercely assailed in flank by O'Donnell, MacDonnell of the Glens, and others. Under such circumstances the

valiant resistance they made was useless, and presently all that remained of the English army was in full retreat upon Armagh. The rout was complete, nearly half the English troops, with their general and most of their officers, perished; their guns and all their supplies fell into O'Neill's hands.

Rebellion General.—The battle of the Yellow Ford carried with it far-reaching results. The news flew everywhere. The Pale was panic-stricken; Connaught in part remained loyal, Sir J. Perrott's justice in that province was bearing fruit; but Munster and portions of Leinster rose in open rebellion. The English settlers were everywhere driven from their homes and holdings; the poet Spenser fled for his life, leaving behind him his castle in flames, and the charred remains of one of his children.

Essex Lord-Lieutenant.—To cope with the crisis Elizabeth sent her favourite, the Earl of Essex, armed with almost royal powers, and accompanied by an enormous force. Essex accomplished nothing. Instead of at once attacking Tyrone, he marched southwards to Munster; one castle taken, and a number of skirmishes lost, formed his record when he returned to Dublin. It was more than a year after the Yellow Ford before he met Tyrone. There was no fight, only a conference, in which the Earl made large demands. These Essex undertook to lay before the Queen. Soon after he deserted his post without permission, to the intense indignation of Elizabeth.

Tyrone's Triumph.—Tyrone was now at the height of his power. Visiting Munster in January 1600, he was everywhere acknowledged as Ireland's leader; if only Philip of Spain could be stirred into the keeping of his promises, it looked as if the day of English rule was over.

Mountjoy Deputy.—But Philip still tarried, and

meanwhile there had come, as Deputy, a man whose vigour and military energy soon changed the course of events. Lord Mountjoy took up the government in February 1600, and with him, as President of Munster, came Sir George Carew, a man of almost equal ability and determination. The tactics which these two adopted were those which had often succeeded before, as when Sydney reduced Shane O'Neill. Marching everywhere in force, they made good their own position by the erection of fortresses ; for their enemies they made even existence difficult by the ruthless way in which they destroyed everything, cattle, crops, property, which came within their reach.

The Spaniards at Kinsale. — The climax came in the autumn of 1601, when a Spanish army landed and took possession of Kinsale. Had they reached Sligo, as originally intended, the task of the English would indeed have been difficult. As it was, O'Neill and O'Donnell had to hurry right across Ireland to effect a junction. When they reached Kinsale they found themselves confronted by a strong army under Mountjoy. In the battle which ensued the Deputy was completely victorious ; O'Neill, as best he could, drew off his beaten troops ; the Spanish general sailed away without striking a blow.

End of the Rebellion.—This was the last event of importance in the great Tyrone rebellion. For two more years Mountjoy and Carew pursued their policy of destruction. Tyrone, driven from place to place, was unable to make any effectual resistance. O'Donnell had gone to Spain seeking further assistance, but instead of reinforcements there came towards the end of 1602 the sad news that he was dead. Plainly the cause was hopeless, and by further resistance there was nothing to be gained. Perhaps few things show the

real greatness of the Earl more clearly than the final scene. So formidable was he even at the last that he was offered life and liberty, with title and lands, on condition of his surrender. In March 1603, just as the breath was leaving Elizabeth's worn-out body, the agreement was made, and James I. succeeded to an Ireland which, though devastated and miserable, was at least at peace.

CHAPTER XX

THE PLANTATION OF ULSTER: STRAFFORD'S RULE

English Sovereigns—James I., 1603–1625; Charles I., 1625–1649.

Welcome for the Stuarts.—At first the accession of the Stuarts was welcomed by the native Irish. There was Irish blood in their veins. James was descended from a prince of the House of O'Neill, who in the sixth century had founded a colony in North Britain; more, his mother, the ill-fated Mary Queen of Scots, had lived and died a Roman Catholic. There seemed ground for expecting that a King so born would sympathise with and understand Ireland.

James I. begins well.—The opening of James's reign was marked by a general pardon for all who had been in arms against the Crown. Hugh O'Neill and Rory O'Donnell, brother of Red Hugh, were received with honour at Court. O'Neill was confirmed in his title of Earl of Tyrone and O'Donnell was created Earl of Tyrconnell.

Brehon Law abolished.—But it was soon plain that James's policy, however defensible in itself, was not likely to commend itself generally in Ireland. The same two causes, land tenure and religious differences, continued to obstruct the way to peace and happiness. As a necessary step for the promotion of good govern-

ment, it was decided that the old Brehon laws must be finally abolished, and with them went the Irish usages with reference to the succession and the ownership of land. In England, and in most of the countries of Europe, similar changes had been considered necessary; they were, however, certain to cause irritation at first; when combined with the high-handed dealings which were to follow, they prepared the way for the darkest scenes in Irish history.

Laws against Roman Catholics enforced.—With a similar object, it was determined to enforce more strictly the laws directed against the Roman Catholic religion. No one now would defend an attempt to make converts by force, but in those days religious toleration was unknown. Anything which looked like encouraging differences in religion appeared to be wholly impossible; so that when James was approached with petitions for the free exercise of the Roman Catholic religion, he could only reply that to consent would amount to an outrage on his conscience.

Thus, in the unalterable facts of the situation, there was quite enough to cause serious trouble; matters were not improved by the statesmen of the day.

The Flight of the Earls.—James himself might mean well and forget the past. Not so the hungry crowd of adventurers, of whom the country was full. To men who had looked forward greedily to sharing in the spoils of Tyrone and O'Donnell, their pardon and restoration to favour were a rank offence. Opinions are divided as to the conduct of the Earls after the conclusion of peace. However this may be, when news reached them in 1607 that they were about to be arrested on a charge of conspiracy, they determined upon flight, and on September 14 they sailed away from Ireland never to return.

The Plantation of Ulster.—The flight of the Earls was interpreted as a confession of guilt, their lands were declared forfeited, and a plantation on an immense scale was planned.

So vast were the lands affected that they covered the greater part of six counties out of the nine contained in the province of Ulster. Of this great tract about three-quarters of a million acres were fertile land, the rest consisted of mountains and bogs and woods. Care was taken to avoid the mistakes which had marked former attempts at planting. What the King sought was a race of thrifty settlers who would personally superintend the cultivation and development of their holdings; he was also desirous of avoiding that intercourse with the native Irish which so often before had resulted in making the new-comers more Irish than the Irish themselves. With these objects in view, the land was uniformly parcelled out into holdings of different sizes, the larger holdings went to English and Scotch settlers exclusively, holdings of medium size were given to Irish Protestants, only in the smallest holdings were any Roman Catholics allowed. It was the rule that all must erect houses and enter into residence without delay. Among those who obtained special grants were many London Companies, and also the University of Dublin, which had been lately founded.

The attainder of the Earls and the plantation of Ulster were ratified by a Parliament which met in 1613. It was the first Parliament to which representatives of the whole of Ireland were summoned, and it gave expression to James's desire to rule justly by abolishing certain anti-Irish statutes, and enacting that for every one, in all parts of Ireland, one and the same law must prevail.

Further Confiscations.—There followed a period

in which inroads were made upon property all over the country. Irish land was thought to afford a fair mark for the spoiler, and now it came to matter little to what race the owners belonged. The opportunity for any further "plantation" on a large scale did not offer, but resort was had to ingenious devices whereby flaws were discovered in the titles by which estates were held, and owners had either to give up their property or pay large sums for its retention.

Especially discreditable was the treatment in connection with what were known as the "Graces." In 1625 James I. died and was succeeded by Charles I. The new King was always in need of money, and when the Irish Roman Catholics approached him begging for security in their property and freedom to exercise their religion, in response to their requests he promised certain "Graces," provided he was paid a sum of £120,000. The money was paid, but excuse after excuse was made to avoid putting the "Graces" into force.

Strafford.—In 1633 Thomas Wentworth, afterwards Earl of Strafford, became Deputy. Gifted with exceptional capacity and vigour, he came to Ireland, as to a conquered country, with the single purpose of governing it in the interest of his master Charles. Success of a kind attended him. Money in large sums was extracted for the King's needs, "the Graces," still unfulfilled, formed a fruitful bait; himself imperious and intolerant of opposition, Strafford was impartial and firm as a ruler; in Ireland there must be only one tyrant—himself. Under him there was much general prosperity; if he suppressed the woollen trade as being a dangerous rival to English commerce, he spent large sums in introducing flax and founding the linen industry; so well did he manage the public funds that Ireland, always hitherto a source of expense, now yielded a handsome surplus;

he even succeeded in raising and supporting an army of 10,000 foot and 1000 horse. He meant it to save his master in the troubles which were fast gathering round him.

Earl of Strafford.
After the picture by Vandyke

But while Strafford must be credited with much that made for prosperity, side by side with his justice went acts of the most inexcusable spoliation; he confiscated on a large scale without distinction of blood or creed; "the lands of Protestant and Catholic, of Saxon and Celt, were equally grist to his mill." He was also domineering and imperious in his personal bearing; all men, no matter what their rank or race, went down before him, and so it fell out that when his English foes rose against him, there were many in Ireland ready to join in the cry, and to rejoice in his downfall and his execution.

CHAPTER XXI

THE REBELLION OF 1641

English Sovereigns—Charles I., 1625–1649; Commonwealth, 1649–1660.

Preparations for Revolt.—Strafford was executed in May 1641; before many months had passed the stern spirit of indignation and revenge, long brooding and with difficulty restrained, broke forth with terrible ferocity. In England events were fast moving in the direction of civil war between Charles and the Parliamentary party; it seemed as if England's difficulties would be Ireland's opportunity, and preparations were secretly made for a great revolt.

Leaders.—The movement began amongst the native Irish; deprived of their lands, molested in their religion, and rendered desperate by false hopes and broken promises, they believed that rebellion was their only hope. The first leaders were Rory O'Moore of Leix and Sir Phelim O'Neill; both were spurred to hostility by the treatment which their families had received. In addition to the numbers eager to join them at home, they looked for skilled assistance from the many Irishmen who had fled their country and risen to prominence in continental wars, and they chose one of these Irishmen, the accomplished Owen Roe O'Neill, nephew of the great Earl of Tyrone, for the supreme command.

October 21 was fixed for the sudden seizure of Dublin with its large supplies of arms, and so well was the secret kept that no danger was suspected till the very day

Sir Phelim O'Neill.

before, when the plot was betrayed and the city made secure.

Massacres.—In the north, however, under Sir Phelim O'Neill, the insurgents swept Ulster from side to side; burning for revenge upon the planters, they drove the

unfortunate Protestants from their homes, pillaging and murdering with merciless brutality. As to the numbers who perished in that dark time no agreement is ever likely to be reached: they have been

Owen Roe O'Neill. After an original portrait, painted in Flanders.

placed as high as 200,000 by historians writing near the time; in later days the total has been reduced as low as 12,000.

Ferocious Punishment.—There can, however, be no difference of opinion either as to the cruelty of the rebels or of the troops who came to take revenge for

what had been done ; in the words of the Roman Catholic historian Lingard, " If the Irishman must blush when he hears of a hundred captives driven at the point of the pike into a deep and rapid river, the Englishman will read with a sigh the order issued by the lords of the Council to the army, not only to burn to the ground every house, but to put to the sword every male inhabitant capable of bearing arms in those districts in which the rebels had been received during the progress of their march."

Civil War.—The rebellion, thus ferociously begun, developed into a civil war, which for eight years ravaged the land, and raged, in many phases and with every variety of horror, until at last stamped out by the stern tread of Cromwell.

Conflict between Protestants and Roman Catholics.—In all previous struggles the contest lay between Celts and Non-Celts ; now first began that religious strife which has been so injurious to our country. The great rebellion was a conflict between Roman Catholics and Protestants. Upon the Roman Catholic side were the native Irish, under Owen Roe O'Neill, in the north ; they fought for absolute independence of England, the restitution of their lands, and of the Irish law and customs, and they demanded the establishment of the Roman Catholic religion. Upon the same side were numbers of the Anglo-Norman nobility and others who had remained Roman Catholics ; they were gathered from parts of the old Pale and from the south and west ; their leader was General Preston ; their demands agreed with those of the native Irish, with the important exception that they were loyal to the Crown and did not seek separation.

On the opposite side were the Protestant loyalists, whose leader throughout was the Earl of Ormond, and

also a Puritan party, which drew help from Scotland and represented the English Parliament.

Successes of the Rebels.—At first all went in favour of the rebels; without fighting any battle of special importance, they managed by the summer of 1643 to become masters of the greater part of Ireland. But they were unable to maintain their position, and this largely because of their own differences. In the autumn

Parliament, 1642, Kilkenny (The Confederate Catholics).
From Hall's *Ireland*.

of 1642 an attempt had been made at Kilkenny to weld the party together. By the influence of the Roman Catholic bishops and priests a "Confederacy" was assembled, and steps were taken to provide for the government of the whole country by a Supreme Council. All were in agreement as to the restoration of Roman Catholicism, but there were differences as to how far the Pope's advice should be adopted, and serious difference as to the future relations with the King. The difficulties thus made apparent were accentuated by the mutual

dislike of O'Neill and Preston; they were rivals instead of friends.

Charles I. offers Terms.—Meanwhile Charles, hard pressed in England by the Parliamentary forces, was prepared to make almost any concession to the Confederates, as the rebels were styled, if only they would send him an army of 10,000 men; the negotiations were long and not very creditable to either side, but at last, in 1646, a "peace," which proved of little effect, was concluded by the Earl of Ormond.

The Table and Speaker's Chair. From Hall's *Ireland.*

Battle of Benburb.—Soon after, in June 1646, there happened the one really dramatic event in the struggle. In England the Parliament had won the decisive battle of Naseby, and Charles had fled to Scotland. Anxious to strike a decisive blow for his side in Ireland, the Puritan leader, Monro, determined to march from his headquarters at Carrickfergus with the object of crushing the Confederates. Owen Roe O'Neill swiftly decided to oppose. In the battle which resulted at Benburb, only a few miles distant from the scene of his uncle's great victory at the

Yellow Ford, O'Neill completely outmanœuvred his adversary; he chose his own position, placing hills on both flanks and a wood behind; and he imposed on Monro the necessity for a long march. When at last the Parliament's army came up in battle formation, facing towards the west, O'Neill by skilful skirmishing made time, until the sun shone full in the eyes of his foes; then, when the selected moment had arrived, he hurled his whole army forward. A charge of cavalry from Monro thrust back in confusion; another charge smashed like the first, which, falling back in a troubled medley of horses and men, carried disorder to its own lines; then the fierce impact of the Irish forces; and in a few moments all was over. Monro's troops in thousands were swept into the swift deep waters of the Blackwater; he had commenced the battle with 6000 foot and 800 horse; O'Neill had 5000 foot and 500 horse. Monro left 2000 dead upon the field, while the Irish losses amounted only to 70!

Failure of Attempt to seize Dublin.—The elation of the Confederates at this great victory knew no bounds. With them, endeavouring to rule their Council and helping with large sums of money, was Rinuccini, who had come from the Pope; his party, which was also the party of the bishops and the priests, now gained the upper hand, and the most extravagant demands were made. Both O'Neill and Preston marched to the attack of Dublin, which Ormond held for the Crown; had they been united in their plans, Dublin must have fallen. As it was, their mutual dislike and suspicion caused delay after delay, and Ormond, choosing what he considered the lesser of two evils, surrendered the city to the Parliamentarians, by whom it was strongly garrisoned.

Execution of Charles I.; Irish Sympathy with

Stuart Cause.—After this nothing prospered with the

Duke of Ormond. After the picture by Sir Godfrey Kneller.

Confederates; their dissensions grew worse; they were beaten in the field; Rinuccini, unable to carry his

plans, retired baffled and disappointed; the Preston party, now the strongest, made terms with Ormond. Soon after came the news of the execution of Charles I., which aroused widespread sympathy in Ireland; Charles II. was enthusiastically proclaimed; for a short time it looked as if his cause might win.

CHAPTER XXII

WHAT IT COST: BETTER TIMES

English Sovereigns—Commonwealth, 1649–1660; Charles II., 1660–1685.

Cromwell in Ireland.—So grave did Irish affairs seem to the Parliamentary party that they sent their chief general and most prominent leader, Oliver Cromwell, to subdue the Irish Royalists. Even before Cromwell's landing, the Earl of Ormond had suffered a severe repulse in trying to take Dublin; Cromwell on his arrival carried all before him. He commenced with the siege of Drogheda, which was strongly held by an English garrison. After a few days the town was carried by assault, and a systematic massacre of the garrison was ordered; only about thirty escaped, and these were sold as slaves to the West Indies. Next came the turn of Wexford; it, too, was stormed and its people were slaughtered. The barbarous customs of the time permitted this savagery in the case of towns which refused to surrender; and, in attacking Roman Catholics, especially Roman Catholics whom he held responsible for the horrors of 1641, Cromwell was determined to spare no severity. The terror which these examples caused made the rest of the conquest easy; there were some exceptions, such as Clonmel, which resisted so bravely under Hugh O'Neill, Owen Roe's nephew, that Cromwell was glad to grant

it honourable terms ; but, as a rule, both in the north and in the south, town after town hastened to open its gates. Nor was there any resistance in the field. Owen Roe O'Neill, the one man who as a general might have proved a match for Cromwell, had died near Cavan as he marched to unite with Ormond. Ormond himself, finding his cause hopeless, retired beyond the seas. So thoroughly was Cromwell's work done that after a nine months' stay he was able to sail for England in May 1650. Next year Limerick was taken, and in 1652 Galway, the last Royalist stronghold, fell.

After eight years of incessant war exhausted Ireland acquiesced in peace. It is estimated that one-third of a population of one and a half millions had been swept away, and the country mourned for them in scenes of pestilence and famine.

Stern Measures.—Nor were the troubles of the conquered people over even yet ; the day of reckoning had now come ; those who had been responsible for the massacres of 1641 were brought to trial, and some 200, including Sir Phelim O'Neill, were executed ; the officers and soldiers who had fought for the rebels, to the number of from 30,000 to 40,000, were banished to the Continent, where they took service in foreign armies ; many were also banished to the West Indies. Nor was it only those who had been active in the war that suffered. The soldiers of Cromwell clamoured for their reward, and numbers who had advanced money to defray the expenses of the campaign demanded payment. To meet these claims a terrible resolve was taken. All Roman Catholic landowners in Ulster, Munster, and Leinster were ordered to leave their homes before May 1654, and to migrate to Connaught ; there they were condemned to settle permanently upon such holdings as could be found for them ; any who neglected to yield up their homes

to the Cromwellian soldiers and speculators before the fatal day were liable to be shot down without mercy and without redress. It is not wonderful that the memory of such deeds has never died; to this day the phrases "To hell or Connaught" and "The curse of Cromwell on you" recall the horrors of the time.

Charles II.; some Relief.—When Cromwell, who had ruled England as Lord Protector, died in 1658, the English people, unwilling to make any further experiments in government, gladly recalled Charles II. to the throne. In Ireland, those who had fought for the King believed he would surely do them justice. Most of them were doomed to bitter disappointment; Charles was not the man to expose himself to danger or even to any serious trouble on behalf of his friends. For Ormond, now made a Duke, and for some personal favourites large grants were obtained, but in the majority of cases little or nothing was done. The situation was certainly difficult; the soldiers had settled into their properties and formed a powerful body; nothing short of armed force could have ejected them; to have attempted it might have cost the King his throne. In the end a compromise was effected; the new settlers gave up one-third of the lands they had obtained, and these were granted to those of the old owners who could prove their innocence with regard to 1641.

One special kindness must be laid to Charles's credit. At his request, the laws which bore heavily on the Roman Catholics were relaxed. The Nonconformists were not so fortunate. Early in the century numbers of Scotch colonists had settled in Ulster; they brought Presbyterianism with them, and all religious movements in Scotland were felt in Ireland also. During the reign of Charles I., and especially under the government of Lord Strafford, the Presbyterians were harshly treated. Their

organisation grew while the Long Parliament had power in England, and the Presbytery of Belfast engaged in controversy with John Milton the poet. During the Commonwealth the Church both in England and Ireland had suffered severely, and the clergy had been deprived wholesale of their livings—to make room for Nonconformists. In accordance with the unfortunate custom of the time, all this was now unsparingly reversed ; not only were the Church clergy restored, but the Nonconformists in large numbers were banished. The bitterness of this treatment, which they shared with their brethren in Scotland, was increased by the fact that they had favoured the restoration of Charles II. Many of them fled for refuge to Scotch homes, just as Scotchmen when hard pressed often withdrew to Ulster.

Ormond Viceroy ; Prosperity.—Over the island thus rearranged the Duke of Ormond ruled as Viceroy during the greater part of Charles's reign. He was a just and upright man, and he had at heart the interests of his country. His efforts were hampered by selfish Acts of the English Parliament, which kept Irish cattle out of England, and interfered with Irish shipping ; but under him the linen trade flourished, the manufacture of wool revived, and there was general prosperity.

CHAPTER XXIII

TYRCONNELL'S MISRULE: OVERTHROW OF JAMES II.

English Sovereigns—James II., 1685–1688; William and Mary, 1688–1702.

When James II. succeeded in 1685, Ireland was quiet, but the new King's acts quickly threw everything into confusion. Ormond was dismissed, and the Earl of Clarendon became Viceroy. The real governor, however, was Richard Talbot, a Roman Catholic, better known as the Earl of Tyrconnell. James, a Roman Catholic himself, had selected Talbot to restore the members of his own Church to power; he even hoped that by Irish help he might once more establish the Roman Catholic religion in England.

Oppression of Protestants.—Tyrconnell began his work as commander of the forces; Protestant officers were dismissed wholesale and Roman Catholics took their places. Made Lord-Lieutenant in 1687, he carried the same policy into all departments of the State. "The Bench was packed with Catholic judges; the municipal bodies were remodelled and made Catholic; Catholic magistrates and sheriffs were appointed by scores; in civil administration Catholics were made supreme."

The next step would have been a transfer of lands held by Protestants into Roman Catholic hands; already the Protestants were suffering from many acts of tyranny

and oppression. Tyrconnell's administration caused dismay everywhere; another massacre was feared; hundreds

Richard Talbot, Earl of Tyrconnell
After a picture by Sir Godfrey Kneller

of Protestants flocked to the sea and fled by any boat that would carry them. Those that remained drew themselves together as best they could and

prepared to sell their lives dearly. Rescue, however, was coming, and from an unexpected source; so extreme, so unwise, had James shown himself in England that before he had reigned three and a half years a message was sent to William of Orange, inviting him to seize the throne. William, who was a grandson of Charles I. by his mother, and a son-in-law of James, was not slow to respond; he landed in Devonshire in November 1688, and James soon after fled to France.

Tyrconnell raises an Irish Army.—The news of William's coming and of James's flight stirred Tyrconnell into vigorous activity; foreseeing the swift reversal of all he had done should William prevail, he determined to rouse Ireland for James. It proved an easy task; there was, indeed, no love for James himself, the Stuarts had done little to win Irish affection, but the Roman Catholics under Tyrconnell had tasted what it meant to be in power, and they rose as one man in the hope of making good their gains.

Though the population of Ireland was little if anything over a million, no less than 100,000 men were soon under arms for James, and the three southern provinces were rapidly overrun. In vain did the English settlers attempt resistance, they were everywhere overpowered by numbers, and had to fly northwards for their lives. In this trying time the chief places of refuge for Protestants were Derry and Enniskillen, towns which were both destined to play prominent parts, first in resisting and afterwards in rolling back their foes.

Recognising the importance of Derry, Tyrconnell, in December, ordered the Earl of Antrim to march from Coleraine and occupy the town. In reply to the Earl's challenge, thirteen apprentices shut the gates defiantly in his face.

James lands at Kinsale.—Encouraged by the

activity of the Irish Roman Catholics, and supported by Louis XIV., the powerful King of France, James determined to come to Ireland and to fight for his crown. He landed in Kinsale in March 1689, and by April 11 the citizens of Derry found themselves challenged by James in person. Nothing daunted, they replied with a volley which killed an officer at the King's side. Surprised and shocked by so rude a greeting, James handed over the command to his generals, and betook himself to Dublin. Forthwith the famous siege began.

Siege of Londonderry.—The visitor who walks round the walls of Londonderry to-day—it can be done in fifteen minutes—marvels that any one could defend them. This was the opinion of those who laid siege to them in April 1689; it was also the opinion of the military authorities within. Lundy, the Governor, urged submission, and then, disguised as a porter, let himself down from the walls at night. Two regiments sent from England to reinforce the garrison withdrew on the ground that defence was impossible. Not so the men of Derry: under the leadership of Adam Murray they were determined to perish rather than yield. At first the most active measures were taken by the besiegers; they believed that after a furious cannonade the town would be easily taken by assault. To their surprise, not only were the assaults repelled, but they were repaid by vigorous and most successful sorties, in one of which the commander-in-chief of the Jacobites, as James's troops were called, was killed.

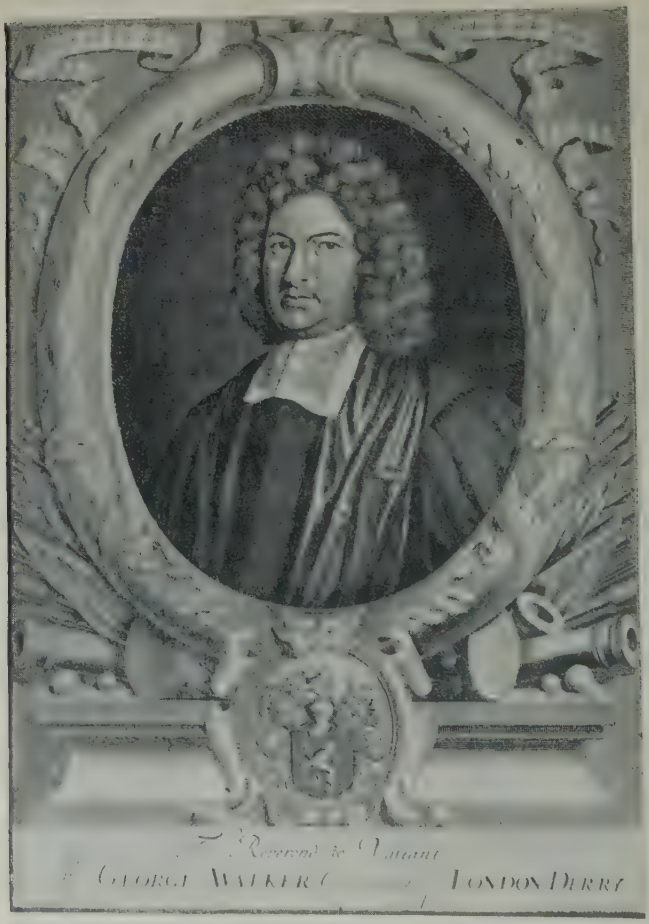
His successor, now recognising the serious nature of his task, determined to reduce by famine what he could not take by storm. Terrible were the privations which followed. Derry was crowded with refugees, and the supplies of provisions soon gave out; the unhappy defenders had to feed on horses, dogs, and rats; they

were even driven to seek nourishment from tallow candles and old hides. And yet their indomitable spirit never wavered. Day by day they met for prayer and exhortation within the walls of their Cathedral; the glowing words and splendid example of the Rev. George Walker,

Siege of Londonderry. From a contemporary print.

who was foremost everywhere, continually nerved them to fresh exertions, and when at long last, after 105 days of heroic endurance, the barriers drawn across the Foyle were burst, and ships came to their relief, they had the crowning glory of seeing their foes retiring baffled from their inviolable walls. The siege was raised on July 30; the same day at Newtown-Butler the Enniskilleners

decisively routed a Jacobite army, and, so far as Ulster was concerned, James's hopes were at an end.



William lands at Carrickfergus.—Nearly a year

went by before William was able to appear in person. Landing at Carrickfergus, he moved swiftly to meet James, who took up his position on the south bank of the Boyne with some 30,000 troops. William had about 36,000, and they were better equipped, but the river must be crossed before he could reach his foes.

The Battle of the Boyne.—On June 30, 1690, the evening before the battle, William, in examining James's position, approached too close to the river, and a well-aimed cannon ball nearly altered the fortunes of England and Ireland, and perhaps of Europe; for William was head of a powerful alliance formed for the purpose of curbing the ambitions of the King of France. As it happened, the wound proved but slight, and did not prevent the King from taking his full share in the next day's battle. The crossing of the Boyne proved to be a most serious undertaking, and for a while the issue was uncertain. James's Irish soldiers fought with determined bravery; but William himself, crossing with cavalry lower down, attacked them on their right, and another detachment of cavalry, which had crossed near Slane five miles up, fell upon their left. Even then a desperate resistance was made, but at length the Jacobite army broke and fled. As for James, at the first symptom of yielding he had started in headlong flight for Dublin. "Your Irish troops have run away," he said to Lady Tyrconnell on his arrival; he was met by the stinging retort, "Your Majesty appears to have won the race."

James had had enough of fighting; continuing his flight southward, he took ship at Kinsale and returned no more.

Siege of Limerick.—But the Irish army, thinking not so much of their feeble King as of the supremacy which had seemed within their grasp, fought on. Their most

The Battle of the Boyne. From *Histoire de la Révolution d'Irlande* (Amsterdam, 1691).

important stronghold was Limerick, to which William laid siege in August.

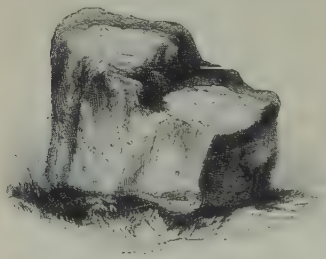
The city was gallantly defended by the brilliant Sarsfield. At the Boyne, Sarsfield, in his disgust, had shouted, "Change commanders, and we will fight you again." At Limerick he had the glory of successfully resisting the winner of the Boyne. As William's siege train, following a few days after his army, drew near, Sarsfield, by a daring and skilfully planned night foray,

Limerick from the South (1685).

fell on the escort, and destroyed both guns and ammunition; when William, after making a breach in the walls, forced an entry, Sarsfield hurled back the King's most experienced troops with tremendous loss; in the end William, who was much needed in England, was compelled to raise the siege. He left Ireland on September 5. Soon after Cork and Kinsale fell; with the exception of Limerick and Connaught, all Ireland was subdued.

Campaign of 1691, and Treaty of Limerick.—In the following year, 1691, Sarsfield was again conspicuous. The commander-in-chief was the French St. Ruth, a

brave man but a rash general. The campaign began by an attack on Athlone by William's general Ginkel; the Jacobites retreated over the Shannon to the Connaught side of the town, and broke down the bridge. Ginkel found a ford which, in spite of warnings from Sarsfield, had been left improperly guarded, the town fell, and St. Ruth was forced to retreat. A few days later he was defeated and slain at the battle of Aughrim. Sarsfield, who, owing to St. Ruth's jealousy, had no part in the arrangement of the battle, now succeeded to the command. With the shattered forces at his disposal he could do nothing but retreat on Limerick. Galway and Sligo surrendered, and Ginkel was master of Connaught. At Limerick, Sarsfield was a second time successful. Nearly a month went by, and William's troops seemed no nearer victory than they had been the year before; owing to the dangers which threatened him in other quarters, it was highly important for William that Ireland should be at peace. Accordingly, most honourable terms of surrender were offered and accepted: they included freedom of worship for Roman Catholics, and would have been likely to promote good results if only they had been kept. As for Sarsfield, he marched out with all the honours of war; a few of his troops took service under William, but he with the majority passed to the Continent, where they formed the Irish Brigade, which became celebrated on many a foreign battle-field.



Treaty Stone, Limerick. From Hall's *Ireland*.

CHAPTER XXIV

THE VIOLATED TREATY AND THE PENAL LAWS

English Sovereigns—William and Mary, 1688–1702; Anne, 1702–1714; George I., 1714–1727; George II., 1727–1760; George III., 1760–1820.

The Treaty of Limerick repudiated. — William's wish was to keep the terms of the treaty inviolate, but the Irish Parliament repudiated the promises which had been held out to the Roman Catholics by the general in the field. Indignant at the way Tyrconnell had used his power for the oppression of Protestants, they were determined to become oppressors in their turn. Once again, the third time (see pp. 76 and 93), there was a great confiscation of Irish land, with the result that only about one-seventh of the whole was left with the Roman Catholics, though they outnumbered the Protestants by three to one.

The Penal Laws.—Furthermore, sets of laws, known as the Penal Laws, were framed, whose deliberate aim was the gradual extinction of the Roman Catholic religion. Not only could no Roman Catholic sit in Parliament, they were all deprived of the power of voting. Many vexatious legal difficulties interfered with their rights of holding, or willing, landed property. Education was forbidden them; they were excluded from everything of the nature of a public office; they could not even

be gamekeepers. The existence of their religion was barely recognised by requiring their existing priests to register, but no provision was permitted to be made for a continuance of the supply. Among the lesser regulations, those which forbade steeples or bells in connection with Roman Catholic places of worship, and prohibited the possession of a horse worth more than £5, are rightly quoted as particularly offensive. Even more disgraceful were the provisions which allowed any member of a Roman Catholic family to claim the property if he chose to renounce his religion.

Such were the Penal Laws which remained in force in whole or in part for nearly three-quarters of a century, that is, until an improved and more liberal public opinion brought about their gradual repeal. In their defence nothing can be said, except that legislation of the kind was at the time customary everywhere; in proof of this it is only necessary to mention that the Irish Protestant Nonconformists were also grievously oppressed in William's reign. During the struggle with James II. they had made common cause with other Protestants, and in the defence of Londonderry many of their ministers worked by Walker's side. Adam Murray, the fighting hero of the siege, is claimed by the Presbyterians as one of themselves. So great had been their services that the Presbyterian Church was given an annual grant or bounty by William III., and under him the oath of supremacy was abolished. In spite of all this they were in many ways so severely penalised that large numbers left the country for ever. But while it is true that the intolerance of the age naturally suggested a Penal Code, the Irish Laws stand out as particularly inexcusable because they were a direct violation of the Treaty of Limerick. The one fact in connection with them which can be recalled without

pain is the general unwillingness of the Protestants either to profit by them, or to put them into force against their neighbours. The magistrates in general were pleased when they could arrange—no matter how—for their friends to escape penalties. Many a Roman Catholic family to-day owes its property to the kindness and generous consideration shown by Church of Ireland friends.

Failure of the Penal Laws.—In the end the Penal Laws wholly failed to accomplish the purpose for which they were planned. The unwillingness to put them fully into force, the zeal with which the Roman Catholics clung to their religion, and the more tolerant spirit which gradually began to prevail, all combined to neutralise the destructive effects of the Code.

But there can be no mistake as to the misery which was inflicted and the cruel hardships which had to be endured. Crushed and wretched, the Roman Catholics for the greater part of the eighteenth century took no part in public life; they were often barely able to exist. Even when the Laws were repealed, their evil traces remained—the hatred they inspired is not yet dead.

CHAPTER XXV

THE STRUGGLE AGAINST COMMERCIAL AND POLITICAL RESTRICTIONS

English Sovereigns—William and Mary, 1688–1702; Anne, 1702–1714; George I., 1714–1727; George II., 1727–1760; George III., 1760–1820.

If we now turn to glance at the general history of Ireland in the eighteenth century we shall find the whole period characterised by certain outstanding features.

Position of Parliament. — Parliament nominally ruled, but Parliament did not represent the nation: first, because the Roman Catholics had no votes, and secondly, because a large proportion of the members came from small boroughs, known as "pocket boroughs," which were controlled by rich men, who could order any one they pleased to be elected. Hence the Lord-Lieutenant and his advisers, who formed the Court party, were generally sure of a majority. On critical occasions they freely dispensed peerages and pensions, in return for the support of their policy, and so were able to do whatever the English Government desired.

English Indifference to Irish Interests.—In the early years of the century Irish interests met with little consideration at English hands. The woollen trade, which had begun to revive, was crushed again; this ruined something like 40,000 Protestants, and drove

them in crowds from the country. The same hard treatment was dealt out to almost every branch of Irish trade and Irish manufacture. English merchants were afraid that full pockets in Ireland would mean empty pockets in England. The opinion was ignorant and short-sighted, but the power to enforce it lay ready, and the results for Ireland were appalling. Poverty and wretchedness were everywhere; famine was frequent; pestilence stalked the land.

Land Troubles.—The commercial evils which came from the laws which crippled and destroyed Irish enterprise were accompanied by troubles which arose in connection with the land. Numbers of the greater landlords were "absentees," and their properties were largely let to "middlemen" who sub-let to others, often at exorbitant rates. There was a tendency to turn into pasturage lands which used to be tilled, and this meant turning away the peasants who had done the labouring work. The trouble was made worse by the growing habit of enclosing commons which the people had always been allowed to use, and by the practice of interfering with the old-standing rights of cutting turf in the bogs.

The Whiteboys.—The history of the eighteenth century is for the most part made up of the struggles for better times which these troubles provoked. The land troubles gave rise to disturbances such as have ever since been common. In the South, armed bands, termed "Whiteboys," because for a disguise they wore their nightshirts over their clothes, roamed the country, and perpetrated outrages, often of a peculiarly barbarous character, upon the property and persons of those who had incurred their wrath. In the North there were similar organisations, known as "Hearts of Oak" and "Hearts of Steel."

The Patriots.—The trouble caused by oppressive

laws, and the overbearing power of the Court party, had to be met and fought in Parliament. The men who banded themselves together into a party with this object were termed "the Patriots." As no Roman Catholic could enter Parliament at this time, they were of course all Protestants. They kept two main objects steadily in view—one, the removal of all restriction on Irish trade; the other, Parliamentary independence.

Parliament House, Dublin.

W. Molyneux.—As early as 1698 a book had been written by William Molyneux, in which commercial injustice was denounced, and a claim made for an independent Parliament. The retort of the Government was to burn publicly the book; as was said by Grattan long after, it was more easily burned than answered.

During the first twenty years of the century the only change was for the worse, until in 1719, by a law passed in the reign of George I., every shred of independence was torn from the Irish Parliament.

Dean Swift.—To Dr. Jonathan Swift, the celebrated Dean of St. Patrick's, must be given the credit of the first victory of the Patriot party. Copper coins were needed in Ireland. The way taken by the English Government to supply the need was to arrange for selling the right to issue the coins to an Englishman named Wood, on terms which ensured for him enormous profits, and threatened Ireland with a ruinous supply of base coins. Forthwith, over the signature W. B. Drapier, Swift issued a series of letters so forceful and so bitter that an agitation which convulsed the kingdom arose, and Wood's rights were withdrawn; as Pope said, "The rights a Court attacked, a Poet saved."

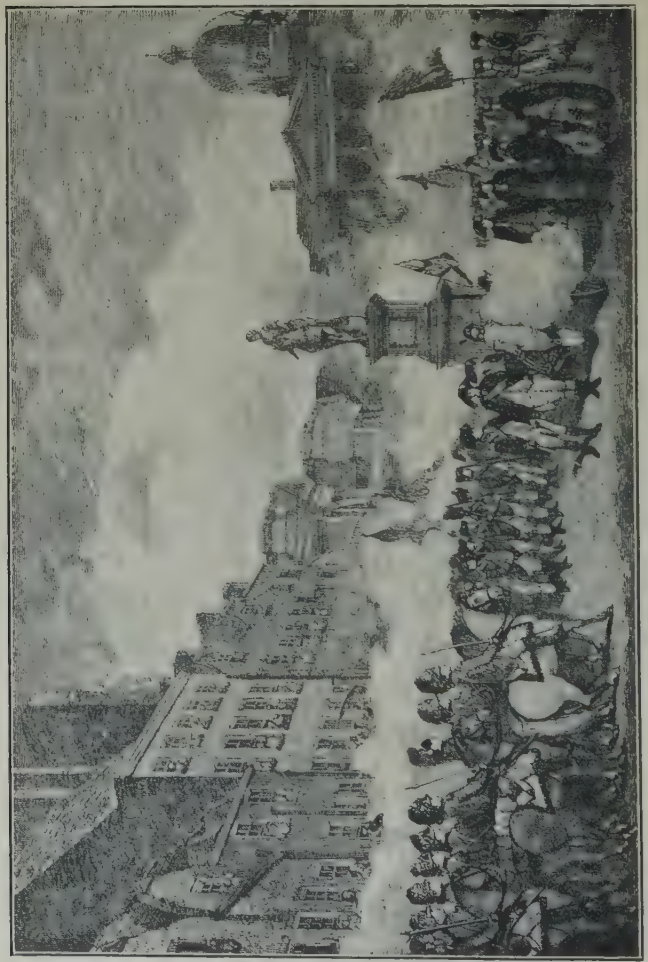
Flood and Grattan.—The next to distinguish themselves prominently on the Patriots' side were Henry Flood, born 1732, and Henry Grattan, born 1746.

To some extent the way had been cleared for them by the "Octennial Bill," 1767, which limited the length of a Parliament to eight years. Before, there had been no limit to the length of the Irish Parliament, except the will of the King. A single Parliament sat all through the reign of George II., which lasted for over thirty years. Plainly there was no hope for the Patriots if the Government could keep an obedient Parliament alive indefinitely.

But the event which chiefly helped was the war between England and her American colonies, because it made plain to the Government the forces which stood behind the Patriots. For the purpose of this struggle most of the regular troops were withdrawn from Ireland. England was at war with France as well as with America, and it seemed highly probable that Ireland would have to face a French invasion.

The Volunteers.—To guard against this danger the Patriots decided to raise a force of Volunteers. The

enrolment began in 1778, and met with such enthusiastic



The Dublin Volunteers saluting the Statue of William III. on College Green, Nov. 4, 1779.
Picture by Francis Wheatley.

support that before long there were 40,000 Volunteers,

a number which afterwards rose to 100,000. There was something almost humorously ironical in the position of this great force, under such leaders as the Earl of Charlemont and the Duke of Leinster. Springing into existence to defend their country, they were disliked and dreaded by the Government because of the power they wielded. Protestants to a man at first, and ardently loyal to the Throne, they were determined to secure for Ireland more liberal treatment and juster laws.

Trade Restrictions repealed.—Grattan was not slow to use the advantage which the existence of the Volunteers conferred. In October 1779 he moved in Parliament for freedom of trade. Flood and others warmly supported the motion, which was passed amidst scenes of wild enthusiasm, and borne through streets lined with Volunteers from the House of Parliament to the Castle. There was no resisting arguments so endorsed. Lord North, the Prime Minister of England, at once took action, and in November the vexatious restrictions on Irish trade were repealed.

Thus encouraged, Grattan pressed forward to his final goal. In April 1780 he moved a series of resolutions in favour of the complete independence of the Irish Parliament. On this occasion he did not press the question, judging that patience and the course of events would before long ensure sweeping success. Two years later, in May 1782, he reaped his reward. Early that year, at his instance, a great Convention of representatives of the Volunteers had been held at Dungannon; with one voice they had demanded independence of Parliament, and they had been equally enthusiastic on behalf of their Roman Catholic fellow-subjects and the final repeal of the Penal Laws.

Penal Laws abolished.—Even while the Convention

was speaking (February 15), Parliament was engaged in abolishing the Penal Laws; and when Grattan came forward in April with his demand for full liberty of Parliament, his motion was carried unanimously.

The Irish Parliament made independent.—In May the English Parliament passed the Act of Repeal: the Sixth of George I. (p. 124) was repealed; Poyning's Law (p. 58), which for so long had trammelled Irish legislation, was repealed, and it only needed the Act of Renunciation, which Flood promoted in the following year, to complete the work. By this Act the English Parliament definitely resigned all right to make laws for Ireland.

CHAPTER XXVI

GRATTAN'S PARLIAMENT—INDEPENDENCE WITHOUT POWER

English Sovereign—George III., 1760–1820.

GRATTAN'S independent Parliament did not become a source of permanent blessing to Ireland. Though free in theory, there was much in its own constitution, and much in the circumstances of the country, which interfered with freedom of action.

Difficulties in Parliament.—Parliament itself stood sorely in need of reform : it did not in any sense represent the Roman Catholics ; they could not be members, they could not even vote ; it only partially represented the Protestants : of 300 seats not 100 were really at the disposal of the voters (see p. 122). In view of these defects it has been described, only too truly, as " a corrupt assembly, badly constituted, and subject to evil influences."

Difficulties in the Country.—In the country generally many things caused trouble. There were still some restrictions which interfered with trade, and the Roman Catholics were still excluded from many of their natural rights, such as seats in Parliament and the vote. More acutely disturbing were the unfavourable conditions under which the majority of the people held land, and the system of tithes. The duty of paying tithes or

tenths to the clergy caused little or no difficulty when clergy and people belonged to the same religion. But it was different when, as has been described in Chapter XIV., most of the people remained Roman Catholic

Grattan.
Picture by Francis Wheatley (1782) in the National Portrait Gallery.

while the clergy who received the tithe belonged to the Reformed Church of Ireland. Furthermore, the tithe laws were so arranged that the bulk of the payment had to be made by the poor owing to the fact that their lands were cultivated, while the grass lands of the rich went free.

The Patriot party under Grattan and Flood were well aware of the necessity for attacking and removing these different sources of irritation, and many determined attempts were made. Unhappily, those in power at the Castle, and their party, offered such determined resistance that little progress could be effected.

New Political Views.—Meanwhile, a new spirit, born of the French Revolution, began to appear. In France the people had used force, and they seemed to have got what they desired: the Established Church had fallen, and the tithe had gone with it; the oppressive aristocrats had been swept away, and the people now wielded the power. A desire to obtain similar advantages by the same rough but ready methods began to stir. The Presbyterians in the North were ready to take part in a movement which promised them considerable advantages; the Roman Catholics, with the exception of their higher gentry, welcomed the prospects of comfort and political standing which seemed opening before them.

Wolfe Tone and the United Irishmen.—The leader who more than any other was responsible for giving shape to the new spirit was Wolfe Tone, a man of exceptional talents, and with a capacity for organisation. As far back as 1759 a Committee had been formed to watch and take counsel for the interests of Roman Catholics. Wolfe Tone, though a Protestant, was so trusted that he was made Secretary of this Committee in 1791. He used his position to promote union between Roman Catholics and Protestants, and in October 1791 he founded the Society of United Irishmen.

The avowed object of the Society was to unite Irishmen of all creeds and classes, in order to reform Parliament and to remove the grievances of Irishmen of every religious persuasion.

French Revolution.—At this time events were

moving rapidly in France: the monarchy was overthrown, a republic was proclaimed, and the King was executed. Almost immediately after, February 1793, war broke out between England and France, and the fear of an invasion either of England or Ireland by French troops arose.

Roman Catholic Claims pressed and partially met.—The Roman Catholics used the opportunity which the difficulties of the time presented to press their claims for Parliamentary rights. John Keogh, a Dublin merchant, and four others were sent to petition King George III. in person. On their way a remarkable scene took place in Belfast. The Presbyterians unyoked the horses of their carriage and drew it in triumph through the streets. Wolfe Tone's labours for uniting Irishmen had not gone for nothing. The King received the deputation with favour, and his Ministers, notwithstanding the opposition of the Irish Government, promoted a Bill in the Irish Parliament for giving Roman Catholics the right to vote. With the help of Grattan and his party this "Relief Act," as it was termed, became law in April 1793. In this way the right to vote for members was granted, but the right to sit in Parliament was withheld.

Viceroyalty and Recall of Earl Fitzwilliam.—A further step in this policy of conciliation was taken towards the end of 1794, when it was decided to send Lord Fitzwilliam as Viceroy, with the express object of removing once for all the disabilities and restrictions under which the Roman Catholics still laboured. Unhappily, Fitzwilliam was not permitted to carry through his work: a change took place in the plans of Pitt, the Prime Minister, and Fitzwilliam was recalled in March 1795, amid scenes of grief and disappointment.

CHAPTER XXVII

DESPAIR AND REBELLION

English Sovereign—George III., 1760–1820.

Indignation and Dismay.—Dark troubles were now drawing close. Anger and suspicion were aroused by the recall of Fitzwilliam, which was supposed to herald a complete abandonment of all liberal ideas, and it may fairly be said that the wrath which the sudden change provoked led directly to the horrors of the rebellion of 1798.

Plots for Rebellion.—Among the Roman Catholics and their Protestant friends there spread a feeling of indignation coupled with dismay ; all hope of a peaceable ending to their troubles seemed over. The United Irishmen, becoming more and more treasonable in their plans, set themselves to prepare for rebellion. Their efforts were helped by a bitter strife which had arisen in Ulster between the poorer classes of Protestants and Roman Catholics. The " Orange " Society had been founded, and some of those who belonged to it had been guilty of violent deeds. To these deeds the United Irishmen pointed as a reason why Roman Catholics everywhere should unite for armed protection of their lives and their homes. The movement spread all over Ireland : the United Irishmen, their leaders still chiefly Protestant, but their ranks swelled by the enrolment of thousands

of Roman Catholics, increased until they numbered as many as 500,000.

French Help.—The alarms of the situation were heightened by Wolfe Tone's successful effort to obtain help from France. In December 1796 a large fleet with Wolfe Tone on board actually sailed for Ireland. Had they succeeded in landing the troops they brought, there was nothing to prevent their seizing the country; for the Government were utterly unprepared. As it was, the storms which have so often altered the course of history came to the rescue, and the French accomplished nothing.

Cruel Attempts at Repression.—But the Government were now thoroughly aroused, and their alarm took shape in the most violent measures of repression. Fearing rebellion on all sides, they imported troops from England, and sent them everywhere in search of plots and arms. So disgraceful was their conduct that Sir Ralph Abercromby, who was sent over to take command and to introduce an element of moderation, declared that "every cruelty that could be committed by Cossacks or Calmucks had been committed by them." Sir Ralph made determined efforts to put a stop to outrage, but finding himself badly supported, he resigned in indignation.

Equally unsuccessful was an effort made by Grattan and his party in Parliament. Protesting loudly against the pillage, the flogging, the half hanging, and the other cruelties which were being practised, they declared that the danger of rebellion would cease if the needed reforms were introduced; to all a deaf ear was turned by the Government, and Grattan in despair retired from public life.

Rebellion inevitable.—Rebellion was now inevitable; the only question was how soon it would come. The

United Irishmen were hoping for further help from France, and they would have preferred to wait and rise simultaneously with the coming of the invaders. But the repressive measures of the Government goaded the people into impatient fury, so that it was resolved to strike by seizing Dublin on May 24, 1798.

Failure of Plot to seize Dublin.—As in 1641, the plot failed owing to informers who told everything to the authorities. Before the appointed day all the leaders were seized, and Dublin was made secure. By this blow the Rebellion was paralysed: without leaders there was no possibility of combined plans or of successful action.

Rising in Wexford.—Efforts were indeed made to carry out the rising, but everywhere except in the south-east they were easily suppressed. Not so in Wicklow and Wexford; in these counties contests of prolonged and determined ferocity took place, and deeds were done which have stamped both sides with indelible disgrace. At Wexford something like ninety Protestants, non-combatants, were deliberately slaughtered one by one, and had it not been for the passionate entreaties of a young priest named Corvin, many more would have shared their fate; at Scullabogue, a barn, containing nearly two hundred loyalists, was set on fire, and the rebels stood by while all perished in the flames. The punishment meted out for these crimes was frightful; apparently nothing was done to restrain the unbridled licence of the troops; and little or no distinction was made between the innocent and the guilty. Most writers agree that between the savageries of the victors and of the vanquished there was little to choose; for the rebels at least this may be said—they were without discipline and without regular leaders.

French defeated.—When all was over two sets of

troops arrived from France ; the first made an ineffective landing in Mayo ; after one or two unimportant successes they surrendered to the Lord-Lieutenant, Lord Cornwallis. The second was met and defeated at Lough Swilly by a British squadron. Among the prisoners was Wolfe Tone, who was sent to Dublin for trial and condemned to death.

Deplorable Results of Rebellion.—One of the most deplorable features of the Rebellion which Tone had so assiduously promoted was the way in which its final form revived the religious animosities which he had so earnestly, and for a while so successfully, striven to compose. We have glanced at the strife which was waged between Roman Catholics and Protestants in Ulster in the times which led up to the outbreak ; in Wexford the struggle was almost entirely one of religion. The rebels were Roman Catholics, and many of their leaders were priests ; the forces against them were mostly Protestants.

It is sad to think that the excesses of a single misguided year should so largely have undone the work of a century, in which the Protestant or Patriots' party had made it their object to unite all classes and creeds for the good of Ireland.

CHAPTER XXVIII

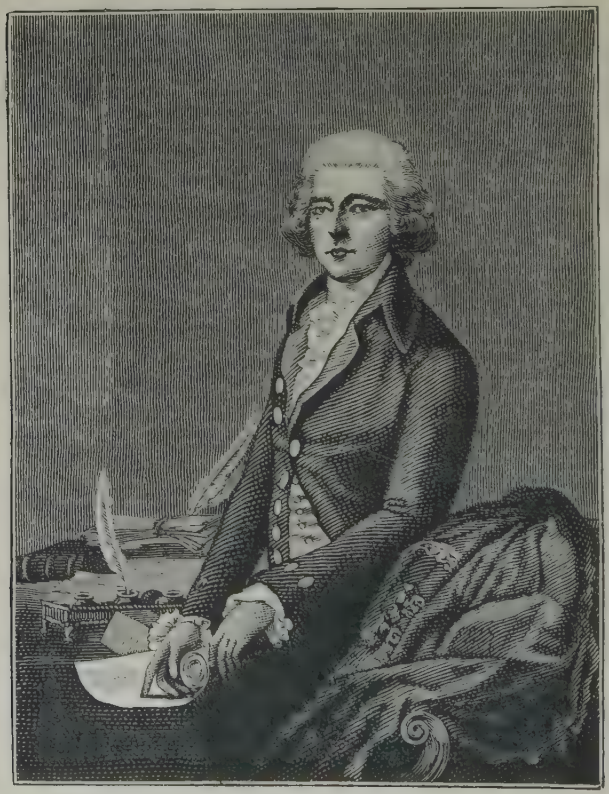
THE UNION

English Sovereign—George III., 1760–1820.

Change of Government necessary.—The fact that Ireland had rebelled was in itself sufficient to demonstrate the necessity for some change in the method of government. When to this were added the bitter and cruel internal differences which the Rebellion had revealed, together with the ever-present danger of French invasion and conquest, there was much to be said for the view strongly held by William Pitt, the Prime Minister of England, that the best policy both for England and Ireland was to unite the two countries under a strong central Government. Both then and now "the Union," as it is termed, was, and is likely to continue to be, a subject upon which different opinions are held. But while men differ as to the policy of uniting the two countries, most will feel that the methods used for accomplishing the Union would not now be considered justifiable.

Union of Parliaments rejected.—The death of Wolfe Tone in a Dublin prison, in November 1798, may be considered the last scene of the Rebellion. In January 1799 the subject of the Union was brought before the Irish Parliament by Lord Castlereagh, Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant, the Marquis Corn-

wallis; it met with the most determined opposition, and when a vote was taken the numbers on each side



William Pitt. From the picture by T. Gainsborough.

were so evenly balanced that postponement was considered necessary.

Pitt's Determination.—There was, however, no wavering in Pitt's determination, and the Government

party, led by Lord Cornwallis and Lord Castlereagh, went to work intending to leave no effort untried in order to secure a majority. It is in connection with the devices employed in this pursuit of votes that indefensible transactions occurred. We have seen (p. 122) that the House of Commons in no sense represented Ireland as a whole. The " pocket " or " rotten " boroughs always ensured a solid body of supporters for the Government, but in order to carry the Union a still larger supply was necessary, and additional votes must be obtained at any cost.

Methods used to accomplish the Union.—The details of what happened have only been thoroughly investigated in recent years, and there has been room in consequence for exaggeration on both sides. It is not, however, disputed that Government officials who opposed the Union policy found themselves summarily dismissed. It is not possible to deny that twenty-eight new peers were created and thirty-two more were advanced to higher rank. All allow that upwards of a million pounds were expended upon the purchase of the " pocket " boroughs. On the other hand, it is maintained that in those days pocket boroughs were considered to be private property, and saleable, much as " family livings " still are in England; and it is pointed out that even when the representatives from the boroughs were hostile to the Government the purchase money was paid. It is also strongly held by many that no votes were actually purchased for cash.

Roman Catholics favourable.—Furthermore, there undoubtedly was a strong body of public opinion favourable to the Union. The Roman Catholics in particular, influenced by reasons to be noticed in the next chapter, gave it their support. One of their prelates, Dr. Moylan, Bishop of Cork, wrote : " It is impossible to extinguish

the feuds and animosities which disgrace this kingdom, and give it the advantages of its natural and local situation, without an Union with Great Britain." The opinion thus expressed appears to have been general among the bishops. Dr. Troy, the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Dublin, gave the Government valuable help.

The Union carried.—After a year spent in preparation, Lord Castlereagh again moved in the House of Commons for union with Great Britain. The debates began on January 1, and were sustained with extraordinary vigour and ability. Grattan, who rose from a bed of illness, took his seat dressed in the uniform of the Volunteers, and resisted with all his force. But opposition was now of no avail. The Government majorities were large in the Commons; they were larger in the Lords. On August 1 the measure received the King's assent, and on January 1, 1801, the Act of Union came into force.

CHAPTER XXIX

DANIEL O'CONNELL—REDRESS OF ROMAN CATHOLIC GRIEVANCES

English Sovereigns—George III., 1760–1820; George IV., 1820–1830; William IV., 1830–1837; Victoria, 1837–1901.

The Union accepted.—Once the Act of Union was passed opposition died away. "The marriage has been made; let us make it fruitful," said Grattan, and his words spoke the spirit of the times. "From 1800 to 1829 there was no movement in Ireland against the Union, nothing more than a few weak protests." It seems certain that if English statesmen had been able to understand Irish troubles, and apply the remedies, the desire for separation would not have reappeared.

English Mistakes.—Unhappily much ignorance as to Irish affairs prevailed in England in those days; and also the pressure of the war with Napoleon was such that England could think of little except the duty of self-preservation. Ireland in consequence for many years after the Union was governed in what can only be described as a blindfold way, little being done except to introduce measures of coercion and repression to meet the many disturbances, which arose from the poverty of the people and the unsatisfactory system of land tenure.

Roman Catholic Grievances.—Active trouble first took head in connection with the grievances of the Roman Catholics. Attention has been called to the support given by Roman Catholics to the Union. They had been led to expect substantial benefits under the new rule. Even if no actual promises were made, hope was certainly held out that their political disabilities would be removed, and that the system of tithes (see p. 129) would be altered; there was also a prospect of Government grants in aid of the payment of their clergy. Nothing was done to fulfil these expectations. Individual statesmen, such as Pitt, were favourable, and many Members gave their support when the subject was debated in Parliament, but no Minister was found with sufficient determination to overcome the obstacles—chief of which was the rooted opposition of George III.—which blocked the way. Meanwhile the Roman Catholics were divided in policy and impotent in action. Upon the "Veto" question, as it was termed, their leaders were in opposite camps. One party was willing to allow the King to have the right of objecting in case in his opinion unsuitable appointments were made to bishoprics. The other stoutly resisted the proposal.

O'Connell.—Nearly twenty years passed, and "Catholic Emancipation," as it was termed, seemed as far off as ever, when the genius of Daniel O'Connell interposed. O'Connell, a barrister, belonging to a well-known Kerry family, gradually rose to prominence after the Union as an advocate of Roman Catholic claims.

Attack on the Kildare Place Society.—His first marked success was connected with education and the Kildare Place Society. The Society was one of many efforts made at that time by private individuals for the improvement of their country. Its aim was to educate the poor of Ireland without distinction of creed.

So efficient was its work that Mr., afterwards Sir, Robert Peel, the Chief Secretary, procured large Government

Daniel O'Connell. Painted by J. Haverty for the late Catholic Association of Ireland. Engraved by J. W. Cooke.

grants to aid its operations; its members were drawn from all classes and creeds, and included O'Connell himself. It happened that one of the fundamental

rules of the Society required that in every school the Scriptures must be read, but "without note or comment." The Society was founded in 1811; at the outset no exception was taken to this rule, and Roman Catholics in great numbers attended the schools. O'Connell, however, noticing that the rule was becoming distasteful to the priests, conceived the idea of organising them into a formidable opposition phalanx. So well did he succeed that, at the Society's annual meeting in 1820, he ostentatiously broke with the Kildare Place system, and founded the Irish National Education Society.

Founding of the Catholic Association.—Encouraged by this success, O'Connell pressed forward with his main object—Emancipation. In 1823 he founded the famous "Catholic Association." Before long the Association spread all over Ireland. Suppressed by Act of Parliament in 1825, it reappeared at once as the "New Catholic Association." By means of a subscription from members of one penny a week it came into the possession of large funds. Soon the influence of the Association was felt in causing the return of Members of Parliament favourable to its object. At last a bold step was taken. The Member for Clare, Mr. Vesey FitzGerald, had to seek re-election on accepting office. O'Connell, though ineligible for a seat, opposed him. Notwithstanding the most strenuous efforts of the landowners and the Government, he was returned by a large majority. By this victory Roman Catholic Emancipation was won.

Emancipation.—The Duke of Wellington, who with Sir Robert Peel had hitherto resisted the concession, recognised the necessities of the case. The Emancipation Act, which allowed Roman Catholics to sit in Parliament, and made them eligible for all except a few reserved positions, was passed in 1829; and O'Connell,

who was immediately re-elected, entered the House of Commons as Member for Clare.

The National Board.—The Kildare Place Society, whose devotion to their original constitution was equalled by the remarkable educational success which they achieved, was soon after deprived of its grants from Government, and the National Board was founded in 1831. Under the Board it has been possible for each denomination to take charge of the religious instruction of its own pupils, with the result that the Board, though fiercely opposed at first, has gradually and with general acceptance obtained control over the primary education of the country.

Commutation of the Tithes.—Some years were still to pass before the tithe grievance of the Roman Catholics was redressed. The payment had always been vexatious; now that O'Connell's success had taught what united efforts could accomplish, a general resistance, so bitter in many places that it was known as the tithe war, arose. Efforts were made by Government to coerce the people into quiet; and by this means comparative tranquillity was restored. It was, however, recognised at last that a permanent settlement was necessary. Accordingly in 1838 the burden of the tithe was removed from the peasantry and placed on the landlords. It was deplorable that so desirable a reform should have been so long delayed. When it did come finally, instead of being viewed as an act of grace, men classed it with Catholic Emancipation, and considered that both were wrung from unwilling hands by the force of necessity.

CHAPTER XXX

GROWTH OF THE DESIRE FOR SEPARATION

English Sovereign—Victoria, 1837-1901.

ATTENTION has been called (p. 141) to the fact that for nearly thirty years the Union remained almost unchallenged. It was not till 1840 that any serious attempt was made to bring about separation.

O'Connell's First Agitation for Repeal.—O'Connell, indeed, once Emancipation was carried, had commenced an agitation for Repeal; the support, however, which he received was unimportant, and "the Liberator," as he came to be called, decided to suspend his efforts.

O'Connell's Second Agitation for Repeal.—But a change of ministry in England, which took place in 1841, seemed to offer a fresh opportunity, and all the forces which had proved so irresistible in the struggle for Emancipation were again set in array. Enormous masses of people assembled to hear the great orator at the "monster" meetings which he convened throughout the southern provinces, and it might have seemed as though once more victory awaited him. The Government, however, under Sir Robert Peel, stood firm. In the view of the Prime Minister civil war was preferable to Repeal. English and Scotch opinions were united in defence of the Union. The support which O'Connell received in Ireland, if enormous in respect to numbers,

was defective in influence, and when at last, in October 1843, it was decided to proclaim a monster meeting at Clontarf, and to arrest the Liberator, the whole movement rapidly collapsed.

O'Connell's Trial and Death. — O'Connell was immediately brought to trial and condemned; soon after the House of Lords reversed the judgment and he was released; but troubles of various kinds now came thick upon him, his health began to decline, and he died at Genoa in May 1847.

Among the troubles which darkened the closing years of the great Irishman were two which, while distinct in nature, were destined to become closely connected, and to affect materially all subsequent history.

The Famine.—During the first half of the nineteenth century the peasant population of Ireland increased enormously; always miserably poor, the people came to depend more and more upon the potato crop. Just able to exist in average seasons, they had no reserve, and when the crop showed signs of failure, as it did in 1845, famine immediately threatened. But worse was to come; the failure in 1846 was complete; almost the whole of Ireland was affected; famine and the famine fever laid desolate the land; thousands died and thousands emigrated; the catastrophe was the most appalling which has visited any country of modern Europe; had it not been for the heroic exertions of many individuals, both English and Irish, and the vigour with which the Government came to the rescue, the whole country must have been permanently ruined.

The Young Ireland Party.—O'Connell did not live to witness the full horror of the famine, but he suffered acutely both from what he saw and from what he foresaw. Perhaps even more keen was the trouble caused him by a band of young patriots who were now becoming

prominent. Loyalty to the throne and obedience to the law had been fixed principles with O'Connell. He abhorred the employment of physical force, and spared no efforts to keep his agitation within the boundaries of the Constitution. To his bitter mortification the younger men of his party became dissatisfied with these limitations, and when O'Connell's agitation broke down they turned from him and formed an organisation of their own. The "Young Ireland party," as it was termed, advocated complete separation, and had no scruples about the employment of physical force for the attainment of their ends. Many of them were men of talent and position; one of them, Thomas Davis, a Protestant, earned a name in literature which will live; all were devoted to Ireland as Ireland, and much was done by them towards reviving and fostering an interest in Irish literature, music, and history.

From the terrible distress of the famine years it was not difficult to gather a crop of discontent. England had helped generously and zealously, but sometimes the help was misapplied, and sometimes conditions were imposed which led to evictions on a large scale. In the sufferings which ensued very bitter feelings were aroused, and when France broke into revolution, just as had happened in the years preceding 1798, the infection spread, and there seemed a reasonable possibility of organising another rebellion. The Government, however, were on the alert, and prompt action was taken. Nothing occurred more serious than a petty struggle with the police. The leaders were arrested and sentenced to death; the sentences were speedily commuted into transportation, and the so-called Rebellion of 1848 was at an end.

The Fenian Movement.—In the years which followed one other attempt at rebellion took place. It differed

from anything that had occurred before, because it was planned from outside. In the state of Ireland itself during the years after the famine there was nothing to cause serious disturbance. The population had been reduced from over eight to about six millions; this in itself made life easier. Further, the years were years of plenty, and everything seemed prosperous. In America, however, there had grown up an Irish population bitterly hostile to England. The sufferings which had driven them from their native land lived sharply in memory; the knowledge of war gained in the struggle between the North and the South offered leaders equipped with military experience. Assuming the title of Fenians, the conspirators determined to spur their countrymen into an armed rising. For inducement they held out the bait of land confiscation; they even descended to the details of individual rewards, and many a patriot waxed bold as he entered, in imagination, upon the broad acres which were to become his property.

The rising, when it did take place, in 1867, was even less important than the scrimmage of 1848; not a single Irishman of position was involved, and the Roman Catholic Church, led by Cardinal Cullen, uttered stern denunciations. Nevertheless the sudden and unexpected manifestation of widespread and dangerous discontent had a deep effect upon English opinion, and led to important results.

CHAPTER XXXI

ENGLISH EFFORTS FOR IRISH IMPROVEMENT

English Sovereigns—Victoria, 1837–1901; Edward VII., 1901–1910; George V., since 1910.

With the end of the Fenian rising commenced the period of Irish History in which we live to-day. So much controversy, unfinished controversy, hangs round its events that it would be unprofitable, not to say impossible, to pass them in review. All, therefore, to be attempted, as we draw this short sketch of our History to a close, will be an indication of the main lines along which events have moved.

The Fenian conspiracy awoke English statesmen with a shock. They became aware of dissatisfaction and discontent hitherto unsuspected, and—to their credit be it said—they addressed themselves earnestly to find and apply a cure.

Three Sets of Reforms.—In three directions there seemed an opening, if not a call, for reform.

I. In a country where three-fourths of the people were Roman Catholics it was considered unadvisable that the Church of Ireland, which claimed little more than one-eighth of the population, should be officially connected with the State, and both established and endowed.

II. The provision for the higher or University education of Roman Catholics had long been a subject of

complaint. Trinity College, Dublin, had gradually removed the restrictions which kept Roman Catholics from sharing in her education and her privileges, but nevertheless Protestant influence continued dominant within her walls.

III. The system under which much of the land was held lay open to grave abuses; in particular, improve-

Trinity College, Dublin. Photo by W. Lawrence.

ments executed by tenants at their own cost, so far from bringing permanent advantage, often led only to an increased rent; and in general there was little or nothing to prevent tenants being disturbed at the discretion of the landlord.

Irish legislation for the past forty years has been busy in these three directions.

I. Disestablishment of the Church of Ireland.— In 1869 the Church of Ireland was disestablished and

disendowed. The Church's connection with the State was severed; and it was deprived of its endowments.

Library, Trinity College, Dublin. Photo by W. Lawrence.

The only consideration shown, besides the grant of £500,000 in lieu of recent private endowments, was

that the incomes of the clergy then in the service of the Church were secured to them for their lives. The Church undertook the obligation of making these payments on receiving, out of her own endowments, a sum of money calculated to be sufficient for this purpose. To the wise use which the Church was enabled to make of this money, together with the generous contributions of her members, the present position of the Church of Ireland is due.

Similar treatment was extended to the Presbyterians in connection with the Regium Donum, as the bounty first given by William III. was termed, and the capital value of the endowment was paid over to the Presbyterian Church. Under Queen Anne the bounty had been withheld; it was restored and increased under George I., and again under George III. A notable event in the history of Irish Presbyterianism was the opening in 1865, after a long struggle, of Magee College for Presbyterian students. According to the census of 1911, Presbyterians in Ireland number 440,525, of whom all but 19,115 are in the Province of Ulster. The members of the Church of Ireland are given as 576,611; the Roman Catholics as 3,242,670.

II. Provision for the Higher Education of Roman Catholics.—Many and various were the attempts made to provide a University which would satisfy Roman Catholic demands. Mr. Gladstone tried and failed; Lord Beaconsfield with the Royal University had a partial success; it remained for Mr. Birrell, the founder of the National University, to accomplish something which promises to be a final settlement.

III. Land Acts.—Since 1869, when the first effort was made by Mr. Gladstone in connection with the Irish Church Act, Land Acts of many kinds have come, and an immense, indeed a revolutionary, change in the

system of land tenure has been effected. Everywhere the landlords either have been or are being bought out, and capital has been advanced so liberally by the British Parliament that tenants are to become the absolute owners of their holdings, by a series of yearly payments fixed for the most part at amounts well below what they formerly paid as rent.

Results; Material Prosperity.—If we ask what has been the result upon the country of this long series of measures, none will deny the marked progress which has been made in general prosperity and material comfort; there are many districts which have been improved almost beyond recognition. On the other hand, in political circles discontent continues rife.

Contrast between Treatment of Ireland: (a) Before the Union.—No attempt has been made in these pages to minimise the wrongs which Ireland suffered in the past. The dealing with land, the crippling of industries, and the Penal Laws could not fail to produce serious discontent and disaffection.

(b) Since the Union.—Since the Act of Union, however, the disposition of English parties towards Ireland has changed. English statesmen have often been imperfectly acquainted with Irish affairs; through pressure of different kinds they have frequently too long postponed legislation which they felt to be both desirable and necessary; but there has been a desire, sincere and for the most part intelligent, to render all possible help, and never was this more manifest than in latter years.

Present Prominence of the Demand for Home Rule.—It is remarkable that the cry for the Repeal of the Union or for Home Rule, which made so little progress during the greater part of last century, has forced itself into prominence during the period when Irish interests

have engaged such full attention. Beginning under Isaac Butt in the decade after the Disestablishment of the Church, the cry became a power under Parnell, and resulted in Mr. Gladstone's two Home Rule Bills. In 1912 a third Home Rule Bill was introduced.

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